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THE 'IRREVERSIBILITY' OF ISRAEL'S ANNEXATION OF THE
WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP: A CRITICAL EVALUATION(U)
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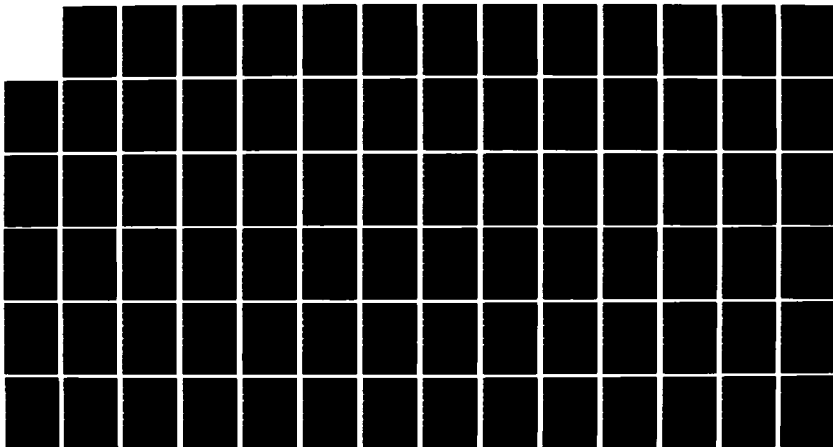
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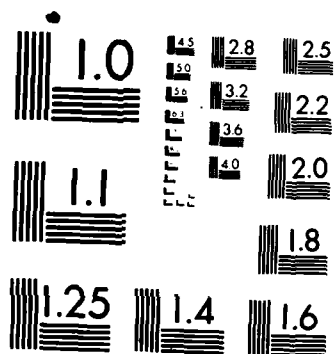
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OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP:
A CRITICAL EVALUATION

Dartmouth College
Hanover, NH

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the last eighteen years United States policy toward resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict has been based on the principle of trading a secure peace within recognized borders for Israel in return for withdrawal from most or all of the territories Israel captured in the 1967 war. Largely as a result of Likud government policies between 1977 and 1984 many Israelis with specialized knowledge of events in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have argued that settlement of these areas, as well as economic and other ties that have been established, have precluded any realistic possibility that Israel could ever return the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Arab rule in the context of a negotiated peace agreement. These perceptions began to crystallize in 1981. In 1982 and 1983 settlement and land acquisition activities accelerated. By 1984 most Israeli journalists specializing in West Bank affairs, and who generally favor Israeli withdrawal, had concluded that it had already, or would very soon become, impossible.

Systematic documentation in support of these judgments has been provided by Dr. Meron Benvenisti and his staff of researchers at the West Bank Data Base Project in Jerusalem. Benvenisti has argued that the "critical point" has passed and that for all intents and purposes de facto annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has become "irreversible." Analysis of indicates, however, that:

- the data upon which Benvenisti bases his argument are over-interpreted to produce conclusions regarding the Israelization of the West Bank that are unwarranted;
- the mechanisms through which changed living patterns in the West Bank and Gaza are presumed to lead to permanent political integration are inadequately and ineffectively specified.

A more prudent, supportable judgment is that although Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories would be an order of magnitude more difficult now than it would have been fifteen or even ten years ago, circumstances do not warrant abandonment of political or diplomatic initiatives based on the assumption that, under proper conditions, an Israeli government could still reach, sustain, and carry out a decision to withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

This conclusion is supported by analysis of five other major studies (including a comprehensive planning document issued jointly by the Government of Israel and the World Zionist Organization) of Israel's relationship with the occupied territories--studies that focus on the security, economic, political, and administrative dimensions of the problem.

Analysis of these studies suggests that:

- Neither security related, resource related, demographic, nor economic imperatives preclude Israeli disengagement from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- The pace of de facto annexation has slowed substantially since mid-1983 and appears to be considerably more sensitive to changes in the economic and political climate than was previously imagined.
- The most salient obstacles to Israeli withdrawal from these areas are internal and stem from fundamental ideological and political differences among Israelis that threaten to polarize the society on the issue of the future of the territories.

It is argued that approaching the problem with the image of a single dramatic "point of no return" obscures more than it illuminates. Instead Israel's relationship to the West Bank and Gaza Strip is plotted along a continuum interrupted by two thresholds, an "institutional" threshold and a "psycho-cultural" threshold.

Having crossed the institutional threshold Israel must expect that attempts to withdraw from these areas will trigger assaults on the political legitimacy of the parliamentary regime. A government willing to move seriously toward disengagement must therefore be prepared to withstand serious and violent threats to the country's stability from right-wing political parties allied with settlers and religious groups. On the other hand, until the psycho-cultural threshold is passed, that is, until the West Bank and Gaza Strip are viewed by the overwhelming majority of Israelis as unquestionably a permanent part of the country, then the issue of the fate of these areas is likely to dominate the political arena, affording repeated opportunities for Israelis who support disengagement to move toward their goal.

It is further suggested that the tension associated with deep and chronic political conflict in Israel over the fate of the West Bank and Gaza will be an important source of instability in the Middle East and constitutes a serious, but latent threat to United States interests.

UNITED STATES INTERESTS AND
THE POSSIBLE IRREVERSIBILITY OF ISRAELI ANNEXATION OF THE
WEST BANK AND GAZA

Achieving a stable peace between Israel and the Arab world is a high priority for the United States. Since the Cuban missile crisis, no conflict in the third world has brought the United States and the Soviet Union closer to nuclear confrontation than has the Arab-Israeli conflict. Situated on the periphery of the Soviet Union, juxtaposed to the richest oil reserves in the world, involving issues over which peoples within the region have demonstrated a consistent willingness to take great risks, and characterized by levels of armament that approach those available to NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the Arab-Israeli conflict remains the single most important challenge to US foreign and security policy outside our bi-lateral relationship with the Soviet Union.

Ever since the United Nations partition resolution of 1947 the US has supported the territorial division of Palestine, or the Land of Israel, as the basis for a lasting peace between Arabs and Israelis. Since the 1967 war US policy has been that in return for Israeli withdrawal from the territories captured in that conflict, with minor and mutually agreed upon border adjustments, the Arab states and representatives of the Palestinians should sign peace agreements recognizing Israel's right to live within secure and permanent borders. Eventual Israeli withdrawal from most if not all of the Palestinian populated West Bank and Gaza Strip has thus been the cornerstone of our policy. Accordingly, important US interests are put at risk, and key policies called into question, to the extent that Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza is judged so unlikely or difficult to achieve as to be, for all intents and purposes, impossible.

Therefore whether or not Israeli governments any longer have a meaningful option to disengage from the West Bank and Gaza is an exceedingly important question. The objective of this study to offer as clear an answer to that question as scholarly prudence will permit.

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DE FACTO ANNEXATION OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict only one kind of proposed solution has ever received support from mainstream elements on both sides of the dispute--partition. Firm and explicit Zionist support for the division of the "Land of Israel" came in 1947 with acceptance of the terms of the United Nations Partition resolution. Israel's commitment to the principle was reaffirmed by its interpretation of the 1949 Armistice Agreements and by its acceptance, in 1970, of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242. Even while successive Likud governments, from 1977-1984, rejected the division of the "Land of Israel west of the Jordan," a substantial portion of the Israeli population (between 30% and 55%) continued to express support for a territorial compromise.[1]

Before 1967 support for partition among Palestinian Arabs as a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict was limited to the Communist Party, which followed Soviet policy by accepting the idea of an Israeli state in part of Palestine alongside an independent Palestinian Arab state. After the June war of 1967 groups of notables and intellectuals within the West Bank and Gaza Strip became convinced that a Palestinian state in these areas, including East Jerusalem as its capital, could be a viable solution to the Palestinian problem. Although rejected at first by the Palestine Liberation Organization, this "separate state solution" became, after the 1973 war, the actual, if not always the public and explicit position of Fatah and the mainstream of the PLO. The governments of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, and even Syria, Algeria, and Iraq have all, since the early 1970's, moved toward this same position--that peace with Israel is possible, but only with return of the territories captured in 1967 to Arab rule. Thus, ever since Israel's capture of the West Bank and Gaza Strip from Jordan and Egypt in the 1967 war, the future of these areas has formed a central focus of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Initial Israeli policy, Arab attitudes since at least the early 1970's, and the stance of the major powers as reflected in UN Security Resolution 242 all shared a common denominator in the formula of "territory for peace."

In 1977, however, the Likud, led by Menachem Begin, came to power in Israel. For the first time in Israel's history the "Revisionist" wing of the Zionist movement controlled the government. Since it was founded in 1925 the Revisionist movement has advocated a Jewish State in the "Whole Land of Israel." Indeed, the Revisionist movement, its military arm--the Irgun (New Military Organization), and the Herut (Freedom) Party to which it gave birth in 1948, have each regarded the East Bank

of the Jordan (Transjordan), in addition to "Western" Palestine, as a rightful part of the area over which Jews should exercise political sovereignty. In 1940 leadership of the Revisionist movement and of the Irgun passed to Menachem Begin.

The Irgun was forcibly disbanded by order of Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, in 1948. But from his "fighting family" Menachem Begin formed the Herut Party. Herut had little electoral success in the 1950's and 1960's. Without formally renouncing Israel's right to more territory, the dominant Labor Party was nevertheless rather easily able to dismiss Herut's emphasis on "liberating the whole land of Israel" as unrealistic and dangerous bombast. Begin himself was denounced as a demagogue. Until 1967 Herut was effectively excluded from the mainstream of Israeli politics.

The emotional upheaval that Israel's victory in 1967 produced reinforced strong sentiments of attachment to the areas occupied as a result of the fighting--particularly the West Bank, containing the core area of ancient Judea and Samaria as well as the Old City of Jerusalem. East Jerusalem and a number of surrounding villages were quickly incorporated into the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem by the Labor Party led government, which also found itself unable to resist pressures to establish settlements in various strategically and emotionally important locations.

Eventually, deep divisions within the Labor Party, concerning the proper future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, added to a growing image of it among Israelis as incapable of continued leadership. In the 1970's the Labor Party lost credibility and popular support among new generations of Israelis, particularly among voters whose families came from Islamic countries. Taking advantage of decades of accumulated social and economic resentment, and of a new militance on matters of territory and security, the Herut led "Likud" bloc achieved a decisive victory over Labor in the 1977 elections. The Likud was quickly able to form a governing coalition with religious parties increasingly controlled by advocates of the "the Whole Land of Israel," and increasingly wary of the secularist tone of the Labor Party.

The new government rejected, clearly in deed if not unambiguously in its official pronouncements, the idea of ever relinquishing Israeli control over the West Bank and Gaza Strip (what it termed "Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District").[2] In contrast to previous Labor government policy envisioning settlements as bargaining chips, temporary security assests, or outlines of an acceptable territorial compromise, Likud settlement efforts were developed as part of an overall attempt to bind the West Bank and Gaza so tightly and intimately to Israel that no future Israeli government, regardless of its

initial inclinations, would find it possible to make the trade of "territory for peace."

LIKUD POLICIES TOWARD THE WEST BANK AND GAZA:
1977-1981

From 1977 to 1981 the Likud government spent more than \$400 million on settlement and settlement related activities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The number of settlements in the West Bank (excluding greater East Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley) rose from 10 when the Likud took office in 1977 to 44 in June of 1981, while the number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank as a whole increased from 4,200 in 1977 to some 17,000 in 1981. Virtually all of this increase came from new settlers in those parts of the West Bank (the central mountain regions and the Jericho corridor) which according to the "Allon Plan" for territorial division of the area, supported by the Labor Party, were to remain homogeneously Arab in anticipation of eventual Israeli withdrawal. Over 184,000 acres of West Bank land and 30,000 acres of Gaza Strip land were transferred to Israeli administrative control during this period through closure, requisition, or expropriation--approximately 13% of the West Bank and 33% of the Gaza Strip. Another 20,000-50,000 acres of West Bank land had been purchased (thanks to relaxation in restrictions on private purchases and by governmental and quasi-governmental purchasing programs). [3] These land acquisition activities were carried out within the general framework of a "Master Plan for the Settlement of Judea and Samaria," drawn up in close consultation with the government and settlers by Matitiyahu Drobles, Co-Director of the World Zionist Organization's Land Settlement Department. According to this plan 100,000 Jewish settlers would live in the West Bank (exclusive of the Jerusalem area) by 1986. The plan included a map of some twenty "blocs" of Jewish settlement to be established throughout the West Bank with the explicit purpose of so thoroughly and comprehensively settling the area as to insure its permanent incorporation into the Jewish state. [4]

Also within the framework of this plan was the construction of a new web of roads linking Jewish settlements with one another and with centers of Jewish population within the Green Line, while by-passing Arab towns and villages. Between 1979 and 1981 94 kilometers of roadway were constructed within the West Bank. [5] Systematic efforts were also made, during this period, to replace Arab-controlled infrastructural facilities, such as electrical generating plants and transmission lines, telephone systems, and water-works, with Israeli facilities integrated into centrally controlled networks.

A virtual ban on the expansion or development of water resources for Arab agricultural use and a general refusal to

permit meaningful investment in industry in the West Bank and Gaza, increased pressures on Arab workers to seek employment either inside Israel or in the Arab world. In 1977/78, for example, Jewish settlers who represented (excluding greater East Jerusalem) less than 1% of the West Bank population, used 30% of West Bank water--primarily for irrigation.[6] Restrictions on water use and competition for water with Jewish agricultural settlements have limited the expansion of agriculture in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In 1970 there were 17,400 farm laborers working in these areas. In 1982 there were 15,100.[7] Between 1970 and 1975 the number of Arab industrial establishments in the West Bank increased by 46.7%, but since 1974 there has been virtually no industrial growth on the West Bank.[8] Overall, between 1977 and 1981 the percentage of the total Arab work force in the West Bank and Gaza employed in those areas dropped from 69.2% to 64.9%.[9]

The Likud government also began to expand the number of legal and administrative services which Israeli settlers in the territories could enjoy. Instead of promulgating a comprehensive statute imposing the jurisdiction of the Israeli Parliament and Israeli courts on the West Bank and Gaza Strip (a formal assertion of sovereignty which Israel is bound, under the terms of the Camp David Accords, to avoid), the government added amendments to an increasing number of laws so that the particular law involved would apply "to Israelis living in 'Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District' as if they were living in Israel." The areas were divided into "administrative regions," within which regional councils composed of representatives of Jewish settlements (but not of Arab towns and villages) were given authority. The "Basic Law for Jerusalem," passed by the Knesset in 1980 was intended to formalize Israel's assertion of sovereignty over the former Jordanian municipality, the surrounding villages that had been incorporated into it by government decree after the 1967 war, and the newly constructed neighborhoods, containing, within 98 square kilometers, some 60,000 Jewish inhabitants.

Another prominent feature of Likud government policy was the change in state broadcasting practices, announced in October 1981, which forbade the use of the terms "occupied territory" or "West Bank" in news reports. Unless a quotation was being cited in which those terms were employed, "Judea and Samaria" and "the Gaza District" were to be used to designate the areas within the Land of Israel captured by Israel in 1967.[10] Consistent with its objective of erasing the "Green Line," new maps of the country issued by the Likud government no longer showed the 1949 armistice line dividing "Israel proper" from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS AND CHANGING TERMS OF DEBATE
OVER THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA:
1982-1984

As a result of these intensive efforts, the Israeli debate over what to do with the West Bank and Gaza expanded from controversy over what should be done with the occupied areas to what, in fact, any longer could be done with them. How far, in other words, could "creeping annexation" proceed before no realistic possibility existed of Israeli withdrawal from these areas, no matter how necessary that might be perceived to be for the achievement of a negotiated peace?

The journalists who have covered events in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for Israel's major newspapers have been extremely well informed of trends within those areas and the details of Israeli land acquisition and settlement activity. For the most part these journalists, have had dovish, anti-annexation sympathies. During the first term of Likud rule, from 1977-1981, they reported details of the government's land acquisition and settlement policies and warned, in their articles and commentaries, of the obstacles these and other "created facts" would represent for future peace efforts.

Nonetheless, in 1980 and 1981, most of these journalists were still confident that the annexation process was reversible and that no dangerous "point of no return" was approaching.[11] This evaluation was based on the relatively small number of ideologically committed Israelis willing to settle in the West Bank and Gaza Strip who had not already done so, and on an Israeli Supreme Court decision in October 1979 requiring the Gush Emunim settlement of Elon Moreh, southeast of Nablus, to be dismantled because the land upon which it had been built was privately owned by Arabs. Aside from the limitations which this decision seemed to put on efforts to transfer large tracts of Arab land for use by settlers, the theoretical basis of the Court's ruling seemed to militate against the government's strategy of "de facto" annexation. The Court argued that as long as the Israeli government made no formal, legal change in the status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the areas remained, according to the Hague Regulations of 1907, "occupied territory" and that ipso facto no settlement in the West Bank or Gaza Strip could be considered permanent.

In 1982, however, these perceptions began to change. Increasingly Israeli journalists responsible for covering events in the territories began to wonder whether an irreversible situation was being created. Not only had the autonomy negotiations of 1979-1981 between the United States, Israel, and

Egypt failed to make any progress toward changing the status of Israeli rule of the West Bank and Gaza, but, contrary to the expectations of most, the Likud was returned to power following the Knesset elections of June 1981. Instead of evaluating the effects of what the Likud government had accomplished in the preceding four years, these journalists and other observers now had to take into account the effects of another four years of policies intended to make absorption of the West Bank and Gaza an irreversible fact of Israeli life. Speaking to a meeting of the Herut Party's Central Committee Prime Minister Begin described the overriding purpose of his second administration.

If you want to encapsulate in a short sentence what our mission is in the near and foreseeable future--a historical mission, in the full meaning of the concept--it is to ensure that Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip are never handed over to foreign rule. [12]

By the summer of 1981, it had also become clear that the government had found a series of loopholes in the Supreme Court's ruling on expropriation of privately owned land in the West Bank and Gaza that facilitated an unprecedentedly sweeping series of land seizures. Instead of requisitioning land that the government would acknowledge was privately owned, the government merely declared as state domain all lands for which proof of title could not be provided. At the same time the military government chose to treat Jordanian title deeds, issued under the Jordanian "Land Settlement Law--1953," as sole definitive proof of title. This rule made it impossible for most Arab landowners to defend their ownership since the process of distributing these title deeds was still in its preliminary stages when it was interrupted by the June war of 1967.[13] In 1981 and 1982 these new techniques were used to transfer tens of thousands of acres of additional West Bank land from Arab to Jewish control. As a result of these and other land transfer practices Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza have virtually ceased complaining about the need to expropriate or transfer additional tracts of land for their use.

In 1982 and 1983 it also appeared that the government had finally developed a coherent response to objections to annexation based on fears of Arab demographic preponderance in the territories. In 1975 15,100 more Palestinian Arabs (mostly educated young males) emigrated from the West Bank than returned to it--approximately five times the average annual emigration rate for Arabs in the West Bank over the previous five years. Emigration from the area remained high throughout the 1970's. In 1980 and 1981 33,000 Arabs left the West Bank. Indeed, during the first five years of Likud rule there was a net negative Arab migration rate from the West Bank of 65,200, compared to 39,200 from 1972-1976.[14] The demographic spectre which Israeli doves

employed to argue against annexationist policies, and which had convinced many observers that, in the end, Israel could not choose to remain in control of the occupied territories, seemed less daunting. The annual rate of Arab population increase in the West Bank fell from 2.7% in 1974 to 1.8% in 1977 to 0.8% and 1.0% in 1980 and 1981.[15]

Even more impressive to those monitoring developments in the West Bank and Gaza was the heavily publicized and lavishly funded government campaign to flood the territories with a new breed of Israeli settlers--apolitical middle class urban dwellers, willing to move to suburban settlements in the West Bank and Gaza where dreams of a detached house, clean surroundings, and a comfortable commute could be realized at affordable prices. Launched in November 1982 this campaign was supported by an elaborate array of discounts, subsidies, and tax breaks. Businesses were offered tax benefits equivalent to the highest available in various underdeveloped regions within the Green Line, generous investment assistance made available--40% of total in low interest loans and 35% in grants, as well as insurance against losses that might be associated with change in the territory's political status.[16] Contractors were sold land at a 95% discount and given generous guarantees and the full cooperation of government ministries in return for rapid development of selected sites. Individuals could choose to build their own home at reduced rates on lots sold at discounted prices. Alternatively, apartments could be purchased at subsidized prices--well below what they would cost within the Green Line (exact prices varied depending on location and the income level of the purchaser). According to the director general of the Ministry of Housing and Construction, that ministry spent 44% of its entire budget for 1982 to support these and other settlement projects in the West Bank.[17]

The response to this campaign was a land rush by speculators, a building boom, and a flood of requests for lots and apartments in both the West Bank and Gaza that overwhelmed the ministries and other agencies responsible for supervising the program. Following these developments anti-annexationist journalists and other observers unhappy with the objectives of Likud policy began to report that a set of circumstances was indeed being created that might soon make Israeli control of the West Bank and Gaza a virtually "irreversible" fact.

As early as January 1982, Dani Rubinstein of Davar summarized his view that "there is no chance that Israel will be able to give up as much as one meter in the West Bank and Gaza, even if it wishes to do so." [18] In April 1982 Shmuel Toledano, a Labor Party moderate and Arab affairs advisor to the Prime Minister from 1966 to 1977, predicted that as a result of Likud government policies "within a few years, if anyone were to suggest giving up any part of the territories, the suggestion would be regarded as

no different than that of giving up part of the Negev or the Galilee.[19]"

As the rush to buy land and settle in affordable West Bank homes intensified, a widely noted mood of paralysis and despair settled upon Israelis opposed to the annexation of the territories.[20] Yehuda Litani, West Bank correspondent for Haaretz commented in January 1983 that seven weeks was not an exaggerated estimate for the amount of time left before negotiating initiatives toward a territorial compromise might be irrelevant.[21] In early February 1983 Amos Elon wrote in Haaretz that settlement of the Nablus area was "ruling out (perhaps forever) the possibility of repartitioning Palestine/Eretz Yisrael...Here is where they are now foreclosing (perhaps forever) what is known as the Jordanian Option." [22] Later that same month Elon wrote that "for all practical purposes (Judea, Samaria, and Gaza) have already been annexed to the State of Israel, perhaps irrevocably." With "spacious villas" for sale to Israelis in the middle of the West Bank "at the price of a small apartment in Jerusalem" Elon thought it possible that by 1985 100,000 settlers would live in Judea and Samaria. The opposition, in his view, no longer had the will to resist the annexation process, nor even the belief that it was still possible to stop it. "The question is," he concluded, "whether there is any territory left to compromise. It would appear not." [23]

In a survey of expert opinion views on the situation in the territories published in April 1983, in the leftist-Zionist newspaper Al-Hamishmar, Israel's most knowledgeable and experienced Arab affairs journalists discussed their assessments of the options still open to Israel for a territorial compromise. Yehuda Litani, of Haaretz indicated that no matter what happened Israel would eventually have to negotiate with Jordan. On the other hand, the de facto annexation of the West Bank made any such solution "no longer feasible." He predicted that intense and direct American pressure as well as generous compensation for the new wave of settlers would be necessary, if withdrawal could ever be achieved. Such "painful surgery" would include, he was sure, "a civil war with the extremists among us." Dani Rubinstein of Davar was particularly pessimistic:

The annexation is taking on a character which is hard to change. Our entire economy is built on it, as is the IDF and the livelihood of thousands of families, not only the ones who live there. The price we would have to pay in order to evacuate the West Bank is going up daily. I am afraid that going back to the old borders cannot be done smoothly and will cause a national disaster which I don't know how we can overcome.[24]

Several months later Hirsh Goodman, defense correspondent for the Jerusalem Post sounded categorical in his claim that

For anyone who has spent even a little time on the West Bank recently it must have become obvious that de facto annexation has taken place....an uncharacteristically energetic and efficient arm of the government's bureaucracy put into motion a process that in six years has created facts that any rational person must now concede are irreversible.

Yet, as with most of these journalists, Goodman wavered in his claim that an "irreversible" state of affairs had already been created. "The point of no return," he wrote, "has been reached, or will be reached within two or three years at most." [25]

The land and settlement rush of early 1983 impressed Palestinian Arabs and Jordanian and Egyptian decision-makers, as well as Israeli journalists. In February 1983, Mayor Elias Freij of Bethlehem appealed to the PLO to move swiftly toward negotiations with Israel. He was reported to believe that "the Palestinians have only two months left to prevent the Israeli takeover of the West Bank and Gaza Strip from becoming an accomplished fact. [26]" In March Freij thought perhaps it would be another year before there would be "nothing left to talk about." [27]. In a separate interview he explained his reasoning:

Time is playing into Israel's hands. It is establishing facts in the area all the time, setting up more and more settlements. If the situation continues, we will reach a state of affairs where it would be impossible to turn the clock backwards. Israel wants to have 100,000 Jewish inhabitants in the West Bank. This is a huge number. The day will come when no Israeli prime minister or government will be able to tell such a great number of people to leave the West Bank and get out of their homes. Time is beginning to shake the ground under our feet. ...there are 267 Jewish companies in the West Bank, situated inside the settlements. This, too, is a frightening figure. Anyone could tell you that soon there will be such a situation where no solution can be found and it will simply be too late. [28]

PLO spokesmen were generally reluctant to express their fears of the consequences of the accelerated settlement program. PLO officials were worried that if they were understood to perceive the approach of some "point of no return" that they would immediately make themselves vulnerable to "blackmail" in order to achieve progress toward a negotiated solution before it was "too late." [29] While emphasizing their awareness of the crisis faced

by Palestinians in the territories, and while recognizing their inability to do anything to arrest the process of de facto annexation, still they promised that, in the end, settlements and other faits accomplis would not prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state.[30] But in April 1983, during the height of the land rush and building boom in the territories, Yasir Arafat's response to an interviewer's question about possible annexation indicates how seriously worried the PLO leadership had become.

Q: Will Begin dare annex the occupied territories?

A: Will he annex them or not? The facts speak for themselves. He has confiscated 44 per cent of the land and has established settlements there. He has requisitioned a further 12 per cent of the land for military purposes. All in all this amounts to 56 per cent of the land, so, in practice he has already annexed it.

Q: In other words, the policy of establishing facts is continuing?

A: Yes. The situation is extremely serious and dangerous.[31]

In contrast to the PLO leadership, the Jordanians, who have always feared that Israeli absorption of the West Bank would result in a politically dangerous displacement of Palestinians to the East Bank, were explicit in their concern that the Israeli government's intensified settlement campaign was in the process of achieving its annexationist objective. Throughout 1983 and early 1984 King Hussein himself indicated his belief that a "point of no return" was approaching. In a major political address in Amman in January 1983 the King described Israel as "about to complete the last stages of swallowing up the land, including Jerusalem..."[32] In April he warned that "if the expansion of settlements continues for even a short period of time, the present reality on the ground will change forever." [33] In January 1984 he portrayed the Israelis as "moving very rapidly towards totally absorbing and controlling the occupied territories" and the Arabs as "running out of time." [34]

In Egypt and the United States much the same concerns were voiced. In July 1983 the chief editor of Egypt's foremost newspaper, Al-Ahram, argued that the "final annexation" of the West Bank and Gaza was approaching. Without firm and united Arab action, he wrote, "the situation in the West Bank and Gaza will evolve into what Israel desires, namely the West Bank will be completely Judaized and there will be nothing left to negotiate on." [35] President Mubarak himself warned, in mid-1983, that

"with the present situation we will lose everything...The Israelis go on building settlements. By the middle of next year they will have everything under control..."[36] In the United States many well-informed observers warned that Israel's policies had passed, or were rapidly approaching, the point of irreversibility.[37] In early August 1983 a US spokesman at the United Nations justified American opposition to a resolution calling for the dismantlement of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories by indicating that in its view Israeli settlements in the occupied territories had become so well established that solutions entailing their dismantlement were "unrealistic."

If perceptions of annexation opponents changed with the intensification and prolongation of Likud sponsored policies, so too did the perceptions of those settlers, planners, and politicians, who have been exerting their utmost efforts toward furthering the incorporation process. While some settlers and leaders of the annexationist camp had been willing, as early as the autumn of 1981, to claim that the Green Line no longer existed[38], most settlers were genuinely fearful of the long-term consequences of the 1979 Elon Moreh decision and successful evacuation of the settlements in the Yamit district in northeastern Sinai in April 1982. Leaders of Gush Emunim staged a 45 day hunger strike in 1980 in protest against the government's enforcement of the Elon Moreh decision. Their calls for formal and immediate annexation in order to secure more land for Jewish settlement ceased, however, once the effectiveness of "administrative" devices for massive land seizures was demonstrated in 1981. The forcible evacuation of the Yamit district, a key element in the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, was a heavier blow to the settlers' confidence. The city of Yamit itself, with 5,000 residents, was the largest and most developed settlement to have been established over the Green Line. A long and thorough post-mortem on the events in Yamit was conducted in the pages of the journal published by the Association of Jewish Local Councils in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, Nekuda (Point).

Throughout the second half of 1982 the pages of this journal were filled with symposiums, lengthy articles, and exchanges of letters, in which settlers sought to learn as much as they could about what the evacuation of Yamit signified for what would be necessary to foreclose withdrawal options in the West Bank and Gaza. The general conclusions reached are illustrated in an article written by one settler leader living in the oldest Gush Emunim settlement in the West Bank. For Pinchas Wallerstein the Yamit episode showed the need for political reorganization, more effective propaganda, and truly "massive" settlement--on a scale that would "change in a decisive way the demographic preponderance of Arabs over Jews." Writing in June 1982, he characterized the settlement in the West Bank as

at best but the beginning of the road. The number of Jewish settlers in this area is very small. It is a drop in the bucket compared to the number of our cousins who live in the area. Contrary to what many think and like to believe there are still large gaps in the map of settlements.[39]

Although some religious settlers blamed the Yamit failure on a lack of faith and religious observance by Yamit settlers, many, if not most, settlers experienced the Yamit evacuation as a powerful and lasting jolt to their expectations for the future. To fulfill international commitments to a superpower and an Arab state, a putatively supportive government of Israel was willing to evacuate more than 6400 settlers whose homes and businesses represented an investment of more than half a billion dollars. Six months after the evacuation of Yamit, settler activists were brooding over their failure.

Our achievements have been many and weighty. This is not the place to give details about them. But after the destruction of Yamit and its surrounding settlements, it is clear to all of us that these achievements are not sufficient to insure Jewish rule over Judea, Samaria, and Gaza.[40]

It is against this background of an "agonizing reappraisal" of their plans and their fortunes that the enthusiasm with which Gush Emunim greeted the 1982-1983 suburban settlement subsidization campaign can be understood. Yuval Neeman, leader of the ultranationalist Tehiya (Renaissance) Party, justified his party's decision to join the government that had evacuated Yamit by the need to do whatever could be done "to make the present situation permanent" by quickly settling very large numbers of Jews in the West Bank.[41] Tehiya's entry into the government in late 1982 coincided with the subsidized "suburban settlement" campaign described above. By harnessing natural and spontaneous desires by Israelis for a better life, the pool of available settlers could be decisively expanded beyond the dwindling reservoir of ideologically committed settler/pioneers. Indeed Neeman was explicit in his promise to use the resources at his disposal as Minister of Science and Development and as chairman of the interministerial committee on settlement affairs to engineer a dramatic shift in the locus of Israeli demographic and economic growth from the coastal plain, over the Green Line, to the western hills of Samaria (the northern bulge of the West Bank).

Although plans for escalating the pace of Israeli settlement of the West Bank by subsidizing the construction of several large middle and upper middle class urban type suburbs had been

developed within the Israeli Ministry of Defense as early as 1979, it was only in November of 1982 that a major, coordinated effort in this direction was undertaken.[42] In an interview at that time with a Likud affiliated journal, Mikhael Dekel, deputy minister of Agriculture and a key player in the settlement drive, described a shift in government policy from emphasis on dispersion of many small, publicly financed settlements, to the construction of urban and suburban areas which could attract much larger numbers of settlers as well as substantial amounts of private capital. This is how a truly irreversible situation would be created.

It will not be the number of settlements but the number of inhabitants that will prevent Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria from being removed or handed over to Jordanian rule...Yamit had some 6,400 Jewish inhabitants. As we all know, they were all removed by the IDF. In Judea, Samaria, and Gaza there are currently some 25,000 Jews. This is far better. It would be harder to remove them, but still this is not enough. There should be 100,000 Jews there. If we reach that figure, even if the Alignment takes power (and I hope we will not live to see that day) it will be unable to hand over parts of western Eretz Yisrael to Arab rule.[43]

Speaking to a meeting of Tehiya party activists in January 1983 Yuval Neeman predicted that by stepping up its settlement efforts Israel was making it possible that

in two years, a situation will be reached where there will no longer be a physical possibility of tearing off any part of Eretz Yisrael.[44]

Six weeks later Mikhael Dekel flatly predicted that "within two years there will be 100,000 Jews in Judea and Samaria, then no Israeli Government will be able to agree to return that area to Arab control." [45]

Many settlers became as effusive as these government officials. In January 1983 the editors of Nekuda heralded the arrival of "The Great Opportunity." Informing their readers that a massive publicity campaign was about to begin to lure large numbers of new settlers to the territories, the editors urged veteran settlers to ignore the lack of ideological conviction on the part of these new settlers and assist them in making a smooth transition to their new homes.

It appears that since the beginning of settlement in Samaria, more than seven years ago, and the opening of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza to widespread Jewish

settlement with the Likud's assumption of power, we have not had as great an opportunity for expanding our ranks as now stands before us, on the eve of this campaign. It is in our hands to determine if the masses of names of those who have already applied will remain on paper or if most or all of them will be absorbed within our settlements.[46]

Subsequent issues of Nekuda reported with unbridled excitement the surge of interest by Israelis in taking advantage of subsidies for land purchase, housing construction, business investment, and apartment leasing in the West Bank and Gaza. In mid-May of 1983, in an editorial celebrating the apparent success of the campaign, the editors called for even greater efforts, to turn the flow of settlers into a "gigantic" flood, of scores of thousands, that would make a decisive "demographic impact" in the territories.[47] In June 1983, Nekuda published an interview with Zohar Gindel, Director General of the Center for Development Towns and Settlement and the man in charge of coordinating the settlement campaign--called "Operation Populate Judea, Samaria, and Gaza." Although unwilling to predict that 100,000 Jews would be living in the West Bank and Gaza by 1986, Gindel was certain, based on recent developments in the territories, that

the settlers living in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza have already sunk roots that are so deep in the land, that they no longer can be uprooted.[48]

Matitiyahu Drobles, whose 1978 and 1981 plans for the settlement of the West Bank cited 100,000 Jewish settlers as the point at which annexation would be irreversible, told a Nekuda interviewer in July 1983 that, in fact,

the distribution of settlements now can prevent any attempts to change our borders, to create corridors, to implement the Allon plan, etc. ...within two or two and a half years 100,000 Jews will be living in Judea and Samaria.[49]

Finally, in an editorial entitled "Neither a Legend Nor a Dream" Nekuda proclaimed that Judea, Samaria, and Gaza held 40,000 Jews in September 1983, that 7,000 more were waiting for their homes to be completed before moving in, and that by the summer of 1984 between 60,000 and 75,000 Jews would be living in the territories. The increased tempo of settlement convinced the editors that it was indeed possible to settle one million Jews in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza by the year 2,000.[50]

This catalog of observations, warnings, predictions, and opinions by both opponents and proponents of annexation does not, of course, constitute evidence that a "point of no return" was

passed in 1983; was or is about to be passed; or indeed even exists. But it does demonstrate two things of importance. First it shows, in contrast to the initial five to ten years of Israeli occupation, when Arab unwillingness or inability to compromise with Israel was understood as the major obstacle to resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict according to the formula of "territory for peace," that after 1982 the perceived locus of political incapacity had shifted to Israel. The question asked in the 1980's is not whether the Arabs can make a credible commitment to territorial compromise, but whether the Israelis, as a result of their increased presence in the West Bank and Gaza, can do so. Secondly, the widespread perception of approaching irreversibility among both analysts and decision-makers--a perception that crystallized most dramatically in 1983--suggests that the very idea of a "point of no return" and the possibility of its imminent passage have themselves become factors in the complex constellation of circumstances which will ultimately determine the fate of the occupied territories.

MERON BENVENISTI AND THE 'IRREVERSIBILITY' OF
DE FACTO ANNEXATION

Unquestionably, the most sustained and systematic effort to answer the question of whether Israel has or has not passed, or is or is not about to pass, a "point of no return" with respect to the absorption of the West Bank and Gaza has been made by Dr. Meron Benvenisti and his team of researchers at the "West Bank Data Project" in Jerusalem. A city planner by profession, Benvenisti first developed his interest in the effects of Israeli policies in the occupied territories while serving for several years following the 1967 war as Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem. Beginning in 1981 Benvenisti began to raise the possibility that Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza, which he and other Israeli doves favored, would soon no longer be possible. With support from the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the American Enterprise Institute, Benvenisti directed a multi-faceted study to document what, exactly, the impact of Israeli policies had been in the West Bank and Gaza and to evaluate the extent to which opportunities for Israeli disengagement from part or all of these areas remained.

Several factors have contributed to the extraordinary influence which Benvenisti's work has had. First, he amassed more data about more aspects of life in the West Bank and Gaza under Israeli occupation than anyone else, including the Israeli government. The result of this intensive information gathering effort was a mass of statistical material suggesting by its sheer bulk how great were the changes being wrought in the territories. Based on official government sources, field research, and various planning documents, Benvenisti compiled evidence that most West Bank land had, in fact, already been transferred to Israeli control. He explained how manipulation of zoning regulations precluded Arab development of lands that had not been formally requisitioned, "closed," or expropriated. He provided detailed information on the explosion in the number of Jewish settlements in the territories and analyzed, in interviews and articles, how their location and the momentum of their development would create unbreakable economic, emotional, and infrastructural bonds with "Israel proper." His population projections appeared to debunk the "demographic argument" of Israeli doves, while his emphasis on non-ideological, economic, and "technical" factors reinforced a growing perception of Likud success in unleashing an "autonomous" unstoppable process of de facto annexation.

A second factor behind Benvenisti's influence was his close personal relations with many of the Israeli and American

journalists (including some of those cited above) assigned to cover events in the territories. These journalists welcomed Benvenisti's information and his arguments. His work confirmed, in a much more systematic fashion than they could have documented, their own impressions of a rapidly and perhaps irreversibly changing geographical, demographic, economic, and political landscape. Benvenisti's approach also made for good copy and for good politics. It heightened interest in events in the territories and helped generate a sense of urgency which most of these journalists wanted Israelis (and Americans) to have about the peace process.

A final and quite different reason for Benvenisti's prominence was the way in which, despite his own political preferences, his findings dovetailed with the objectives of the Israeli government and of those in charge of the implementation of policy in the territories. From the point of view of Eliyahu Ben-Elissar, one of Prime Minister Begin's closest confidants and chairman of the semi-secret committee appointed by the first Begin government to plan overall policy toward the territories, Benvenisti was in the process of "scientifically proving" that the Likud had successfully accomplished its objective of eliminating the option of territorial compromise.[51] If this induced a sense of resignation and despair among anti-annexationists, so much the better. Benvenisti was thus given privileged access to information and planning documents developed by the Jewish Agency Land Settlement Department (an arm of the World Zionist Organization which works closely with government agencies and settler organizations). The vivid and positive portrayal of an Israel including Judea, Samaria, and Gaza which these plans contained left powerful impressions, including the impression that details of implementation, not basic political issues, were all that remained problematical about Israel's absorption of the territories.

However, a close reading of the articles Benvenisti has written since mid-1981 and of the texts of published interviews, shows his own ambivalence about making absolutely categorical his overall judgement that the annexation process can no longer be reversed.

In April 1981 Benvenisti characterized the social, economic, administrative, and infrastructural changes in the West Bank as so pervasive that "in practical terms" the West Bank had already been integrated into Israel. Suburban settlements were expanding, he wrote, and would "soon be an inseparable part of the urban areas (in Israel proper) to which they belong." Partition solutions he characterized as "unrealistic."

The Jewish control of the West Bank after 14 years is similar to the Jewish control of Galilee after 31

years.

But in seeming contradiction, he also suggested, as "the only real option that exists today," a policy of "disentanglement" based on establishment of an Israeli "trusteeship" over the occupied territories. Benvenisti, in April 1981 at any rate, saw value in small changes in administrative policy and resource allocation which could help encourage Arab political and economic development, foster reconciliation, and "reverse trends." [52]

Eighteen months later, in October 1982, he told a group at the American Enterprise Institute that Israel was "5 minutes to midnight" on the West Bank. By this evocative phrase he meant that

within 36 months there will be some 100,000 Jewish inhabitants of the West Bank. If this occurs, it will become impossible for any Israeli government to relinquish control. [53]

In this context Benvenisti endorsed the Reagan initiative as an urgently needed opportunity for Israeli opposition to annexation to coalesce before it was too late.

Four months later, concerned about the slow progress of the Reagan initiative, Benvenisti again warned that the critical point was rapidly approaching--the point beyond which it would be forever impossible for Israel to withdraw from the territories. In a column published in the New York Times in February 1983, Benvenisti wrote that

if Israeli political unrest and Arab procrastination are allowed to prolong the present diplomatic impasse, Israel's annexation of the territories will soon reach the point of no return. [54]

One year later, in April of 1984, Benvenisti published an authoritative exposition of his views and of the evidence to support them in a book entitled The West Bank Data Project: A Survey of Israel's Policies. Including thirty statistical tables and thirteen detailed maps of describing West Bank roads, land use, land expropriation, settlement, demography, and construction, the book's message was widely interpreted to be that it was no longer "5 minutes to midnight." Rather, the point of no return had passed; Israeli absorption of the West Bank had become permanent. The Christian Science Monitor, for example, described Benvenisti's book by reporting that

This specialist on Arab affairs sees an Israel, as of this very moment, locked into permanent domination over more than a million Palestinian Arabs. [55]

Careful reading of the text of the book itself shows that Benvenisti does not use absolutely categorical language about the irreversibility of annexation. "Theoretically," he writes, "the process might be "reversible." [56] But he is not fully consistent in his formulations. At one point in the text he characterizes "annexation" as "for all practical purposes...only a matter of time," yet on the same page he warns the PLO of the consequences of not realizing, quickly, that "the annexation of the territories is approaching the point of no return." [57] Certain passages in the book, suggesting that "the critical point has passed," that "the whole political discussion, which is based on the premise that things are reversible, is irrelevant and has been overtaken by events," and that Israel's relationship to the occupied territories "have assumed quasi permanence," as well as similar statements made by Benvenisti at a news conference announcing the book's publication, have been repeatedly and not unjustifiably quoted to accentuate the argument that a "point of no return" had been passed. [58] A senior State Department official, unwilling to be quoted by name, lent credence to this interpretation of Benvenisti's work by commenting that

the study is a powerful contribution to the discussion about what to do in the Middle East. Much of what Benvenisti says is known and accepted by some of our people, but nobody is going to say so up front. [59]

As long as Benvenisti adhered to the image that Israel was "five minutes to midnight" on the West Bank, doves in the Israeli Labor Party and in groups associated with the anti-annexationist movement "Peace Now," were supportive of his work and saw in his warnings and the information he provided an important way to pressure apathetic Israelis and timid US diplomats to intensify peace efforts before it became "too late." But once Benvenisti began to argue that, realistically, the "turning point" had been passed, that dovish proposals for territorial compromise were "naive," "anachronistic," and even counter-productive, and that efforts should shift to creating better conditions for Palestinian Arabs within a "greater Israel," leaders of the anti-annexationist camp in Israel vigorously attacked both Benvenisti and his work. Abba Eban, Yehoshaphat Harkabi, Yossi Sarid, and Shulamit Aloni were but a few of the Israeli spokesmen for that point of view who condemned Benvenisti as a "defeatist," "a heretic," and as someone whose work was directly supporting the annexationist effort. Benvenisti himself indicated that

I've been attacked more by the doves in Israel than by the hawks, because what I tell the doves is that the hawks have won. They have won the land. [60]

The Israeli Labor Party, and its dovish allies, have, of

course, powerful political interests in the rejection of Benvenisti's argument. If it be accepted that it has become impossible for Israel to relinquish control over enough of the West Bank and Gaza to make a difference, the "anti-annexationist" camp loses its raison d'être. Doves would be left with two unpalatable alternatives: either abandon the search for peace and live as well and as securely as possible in a Zionist version of an apartheid state, or abandon the idea of a Jewish state and seek peace and the realization of Zionist ideals in a bi-national democracy.

Faced with such unattractive alternatives, it is not surprising that Labor Party spokesmen and Israeli peace activists vigorously and angrily reject Benvenisti's conclusions. Their anger is sharpened by the fact that Benvenisti is one of their own, a familiar figure on Israel's left, a founder of the Tel Aviv based International Centre for Peace in the Middle East, and the number two candidate on the dovish Citizens Rights list for the Knesset in 1981. His position, interpreted as a counsel of despair, is therefore seen not only as a betrayal, but also as a particularly potent weapon in the hands of the annexationist right. Hence criticism is often based on vilification of Benvenisti himself, rather than on careful examination of his argument.

But furious rhetoric aside, Israeli doves have pointed out important flaws in his Benvenisti's approach. Nothing is absolutely final in politics, they say, though the costs of change may rise. Settlements can remain even if Israeli authority is withdrawn. Bold leadership is required, they argue, along with intensified and costly resistance to Israeli rule in the territories, Arab leaders publicly prepared to make real peace, and vigorous US involvement in the peace process.

Indeed, nothing short of genocide is absolutely final in politics. As Abba Eban never tires of saying, de Gaulle led France out of Algeria despite 120 years of colonization, a wide range of vested economic interests, military opposition and the presence there of a million determined settlers. Similarly, Yehoshaphat Harkabi, former director of Israeli military intelligence and now closely associated with Eban's dovish views, has argued that if roads, towns, and waterworks determined political boundaries, the Roman Empire would still be ruling the entire Mediterranean basin. Benvenisti and those who echo his opinions are clearly wrong to think that the curve of political possibilities simply stops at one critical "point of no return." [61]

But hedged about with qualifications, Benvenisti's claims about irreversibility can be protected from this extreme sort of objection. The more important question is whether the changes Benvenisti describes in Israel's relationship to the West Bank

and Gaza Strip warrant the conclusion that political initiatives based on the presumption that Israeli withdrawal is feasible should be abandoned. Indeed, systematic analysis of the data Benvenisti supplies, and the inferences he makes from those data, yield a substantially more fluid picture of the annexation process--a picture which suggests that certain drastic changes in Israel's relationship to the territories have occurred with which opponents of permanent absorption must come to terms, but which yet affords meaningful opportunities for political and diplomatic activity aimed at eventual Israeli disengagement.

The first four chapters of The West Bank Data Project: A Survey of Israel's Policies on demography, economics, land use, and land ownership describe the selective incorporation of the West Bank into Israel--selective in the sense that its Arab inhabitants are excluded from Israeli jurisdiction when inclusion would threaten the economic position of important Israeli groups or entail the extension of political and social rights to them, but included when exclusion would jeopardize Israeli control over key resources or prevent Israeli settlers from feeling that they continue to live fully within the state. Chapter 5 shows how the accession to power of the Likud in 1977 fundamentally changed the character of Israeli government policies toward the West Bank, though Benvenisti also emphasizes elements of continuity that existed in administrative, legal, and a variety of other spheres between Likud practices and earlier Labor government policies.

Chapter 6 contains a chronological schematization of Israeli settlement activities in the West Bank since 1967: Allon-plan security-oriented settlement sponsored by Labor party governments from 1967 to 1977, concentrating on the Jordan Valley and the Etzion Bloc (Labor's creation of new neighborhoods in the greater East Jerusalem area is ignored in this context); Gush Emunim-initiated, Likud government-supported establishment of highly motivated groups of settlers in the West Bank's heavily populated central massif from 1977 to 1981; and, from 1982 to the present, the government-subsidized flow of non-ideological suburbanites to settlements across the green line but within commuting distance of major Israeli metropolitan centers.

But it is the final chapter, "A Turning Point," which contains what is most distinctive about Benvenisti's analysis--his claim that the permanent incorporation of the occupied territories into Israel not only will not, but cannot be stopped.

The political, military, socio-economic, and psychological processes now working toward total annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip now outweigh those that work against it. The gap between the contending forces will ultimately permit the complete integration of the occupied territories.

Considered statistically, those processes do not yet appear to have reached the point of no return. When we consider the dynamics of all the forces as well as the time element, however, we can see that the critical point has passed.[62]

Benvenisti ascribes particular importance to the impact of the Likud policy of creating economic incentives for non-ideologically oriented Israelis to move to the West Bank. The fact that middle-class Israelis have moved to the West Bank in search of larger apartments, detached houses, clean air and pleasant surroundings is, he asserts, a sign that annexation has already happened--and an instrument for its acceleration. His reasoning appears to be that Israelis would not be moving with their families across the Green Line if, in their view, the incorporation of the West Bank into Israel were not an accomplished fact. Furthermore, as increasing numbers of Israelis make this choice, it becomes less and less likely that images of the West Bank as "occupied Arab territory" will survive--images that must survive in the consciousness of significant numbers of Israelis if a decision to withdraw is ever to be taken and implemented.

There is much that is sound in the Benvenisti analysis, and critics of his position who ignore the implications of processes he describes risk losing whatever chance of achieving their political objectives still remains. But his analysis is also seriously flawed, methodologically and conceptually. The data are over-interpreted to produce conclusions regarding the Judaization of the West Bank that are unwarranted. And the mechanisms through which changed living patterns lead to political integration are inadequately and ineffectively specified. While it is surely true that Israel's political options have been drastically affected by 18 years of creeping and not-so-creeping annexation, these flaws in the Benvenisti analysis must be understood before the choices that remain can be appreciated and thoughtfully considered.

In his demographic discussion, Benvenisti places great weight on the out-migration of 136,000 West Bank Palestinians between 1967 and 1982. Especially prominent among the emigrants are young and middle-aged men with relatively high levels of education. With continued employment opportunities for educated Palestinians in the oil-rich Arab states, lower birth rates to be anticipated in association with higher standards of living in the territory, and Israeli policies designed to minimize economic opportunity for West Bank Arabs, Benvenisti concludes that in 1991 the ratio of Jews to Arabs throughout the whole of the area presently controlled by Israel will be approximately what it is today--one third Arab, two-thirds Jewish.

the so-called demographic threat, that is, the gradually increasing proportion of Arabs versus Jews, a notion that is widespread in Israeli dovish political circles, is not upheld by the data.[63]

Moreover, taking into account Jewish development of the area, and projecting an annual rate of Jewish settlement in the West Bank from 1984-1991 as double what it was from 1981-1983, Benvenisti pictures a radical transformation in the numerical balance between Arabs and Jews.[64]

But a closer look suggests a far less categorical conclusion. Benvenisti bases his projections on the assumption of what he calls "normal conditions." Just as non-ideological factors are more important than ideological motives in explaining and predicting Jewish settlement on the West Bank, so too will these factors determine Arab movement out of-and into-the West Bank. Thus, according to Benvenisti, the key element that affects Arab out-migration is the level of employment opportunity in the Arab world vs. employment opportunities in Israel or the West Bank.

But what are "normal" as opposed to "catastrophic" conditions? Historically, what has been the relative importance of "normal" as opposed to "catastrophic" conditions in the determination of the demographic composition of this area? And how many different sorts of "normal" conditions are possible that might affect the rate of migration into and out of the West Bank?

Surprising answers to these questions are found in the paper, written by a member of Benvenisti's staff, upon which his discussion of the demographic situation on the West Bank is almost entirely based: "The Populations of the Administered Territories: Some Demographic Trends and Implications" (Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), by Eitan Sabatello. According to Sabatello, since World War I "catastrophic" factors, not "normal" socio-economic processes have largely determined the demographic composition of the West Bank area conditions.

In the case of the West Bank (the area included between the Jordan river and the 1949 armistice line between the Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Israel), and the Gaza Strip, the significance of upheavals during the last 60 years has perhaps overwhelmed the importance of demographic and social developments and the former have led to population shifts.[65]

Sabatello also stresses the wide variation that may obtain within the category of "normal" conditions and the unpredictability of the migration patterns that might be associated with "normal" conditions. Whereas Benvenisti's

projections are based on the assumption of a continuation of the late 1970s trend toward high rates of Arab out migration, Sabatello warns that "migration...is often the most unpredictable factor in demographic work" and that, in light of possible changes in Jordanian legal regulations, foreign demand for Palestinian labor, and changing economic conditions locally, "future emigration from the territories during "normal periods" is hard to estimate." [66] Indeed the projection of relatively high rates of Arab out migration, a key element in Benvenisti's analysis, is characterized originally by Sabatello as an estimate offered "for the sake of simplicity," and which implies "that a "normal period" lies before us, during which the economic pulls from abroad will be stronger than those of the early 1970's." [67]

The fact is, however, that economic circumstances in the Persian Gulf states, where most Palestinian migrants have sought employment, have changed significantly. Rates of economic growth have slowed, and employment opportunities and relative wage rates have been substantially reduced. It has been estimated that an Arab worker in the West Bank will leave his family to work elsewhere only if by doing so he can earn at least ten times what can be earned by staying at home. [68] Thus employment opportunities outside of the West Bank and Israel need not disappear to affect out migration rates--reduction in relative wage rates will itself have a powerful impact.

This does seem to be one of the reasons why, in the years since Sabatello wrote his study, the rate of out-migration appears to have fallen dramatically. Sabatello's statistics for Arab migration rates to and from the West Bank, which Benvenisti quotes, go no further than 1981, during which 15,800 more Arabs were estimated to have left the West Bank than returned there. [69] But economic developments in the Gulf plus Jordanian restrictions on the ease of travel between the West Bank and the East Bank, imposed to help reduce emigration rates, contributed to a drop in the out-migration rate in 1982, to 11,000, according to a Bank of Israel study. In 1983 the balance of Arab out-migration was reported to have dropped even further, to 4,000, while in June of 1984 the Military Government reported that for the first half of that year the rate had fallen to zero. [70]

There are a number of other reasons to expect that this trend will continue, or at least to discount the likelihood that high rates of Arab emigration will resume quickly and continue for long periods of time. One factor which might produce such out-migration is high unemployment among West Bank and Gaza workers. Such a development is possible, of course, in Israel's straitened economic circumstances, but aside from the difficulty Israel has had convincing Jewish workers to accept the sort of employment to which Arabs have become accustomed, the military

government has itself always placed a very high priority on maintaining full employment in the territories. In this context Defense Minister Yithak Rabin has moved to encourage a number of development projects in the West Bank, some new, some that had been postponed by his predecessors, precisely in order to increase the number of jobs for Arabs of all levels of education. For similar reasons, and also as part of its commitment to the United States to enhance the "quality of life" of West Bank Arabs, the Peres government has also moved toward the establishment of an Arab bank on the West Bank and has encouraged West Bankers to contact US organizations and US government agencies to generate funds for economic development.

Additional reasons to expect Arabs to stay in the West Bank are provided by Benvenisti himself. Ironically, as he points out, intensive Jewish settlement activity provides substantial employment opportunities for Arab villagers in both construction and services, thereby increasing the number able to stay.[71] Such opportunities are particularly plentiful in the new "suburbs" inhabited by non-ideological, middle class Israelis. Even in its own settlements Gush Emunim has had great difficulty preventing settlers from taking advantage of cheap and plentiful Arab labor. Efforts to impose restrictions on the use of such labor have largely failed to stop the flow of Arab street-cleaners, sub-contractors, domestics, construction workers, and day laborers into the settlements.

Discussions of the changing landscape of the West Bank have rightly focused on the growth of the Jewish presence in the occupied territories. In his 1984 study Benvenisti reported that in September 1983 28,400 Jews lived in 106 settlements established within the West Bank (excluding greater East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip. 12,731 housing units had already been completed or were under construction in these settlements.[72] In 1985 Benvenisti released a report on Israeli population in the West Bank alone which said that at the end of 1984 Jewish settlers on the West Bank numbered 42,600, inhabiting 114 settlements.[73] In his 1984 study Benvenisti described the Israelis as "in the process of gaining direct control over 40 percent of the West Bank land mass and 31 percent of the Gaza Strip area." [74] In a follow-up study published in 1985 Benvenisti raised his estimate, asserting that through expropriation, requisitions, zoning laws, military closure orders, the creation of nature preserves, and the construction of roads "total Israeli land control (seizure and restrictions) amounts to 2,838,500 dunams, or 52% of the West Bank land mass." [75] His prediction is that by 1990 100,000 Jews will live in the West Bank, apart from greater East Jerusalem, and that 1 million Jews can be settled on land already transferred to Jewish control.[76]

The image that Benvenisti cultivates with the statistical material he presents is of a West Bank in which a dynamic, economically progressive, rapidly expanding Jewish population and the infrastructural, residential, industrial, agricultural, and recreational facilities it is building, will, within a decade or two, "monopolize the environment," completely overshadowing, if not literally out-numbering, the Arab population.[77] The picture of the Arab population on the West Bank conveyed by Benvenisti is one of stagnation, weakness, and increasing marginality. The Arabs "will remain," he writes, "disenfranchised and discriminated against...lacking proper physical infrastructure, fragmented and harassed, and powerless to shape their future or to resist further encroachment." [78].

As noted earlier, both the Israeli and American press, as well as government analysts, have focused enormous attention on the scope and pace of Jewish settlement. Unfortunately, considerably less attention has been devoted to the fact that--in spite of the thick network of zoning and other restrictions that Benvenisti describes--Arab residential construction has also expanded rapidly. The motivation is partly economic: there are few other investment outlets for savings and remittances from relatives abroad. It is also political: Arabs believe that land on which homes have been built will be less easily expropriated than land devoted to other uses.

Benvenisti himself characterizes Arab "building activity and sprawl" on the West Bank as "phenomenal." He notes that the per capita rate of building starts among West Bank Arabs was 30 percent higher than the rate within Israel during the 1974-1980 period. If anything, the gap has actually widened since then. The idea that Jewish settlements might literally "crowd Arabs out" of the West Bank, a notion encouraged partly by Benvenisti's own imagery, is debunked in his 1984 study. There he comments that "the Arab population can be doubled within the existing built-up areas without causing congestion." [79] This would reduce the land cultivated by Arabs, but it does seem inevitable that the economic future of the West Bank, whether ruled by Israelis or Palestinians, lies in industry and services, rather than in agriculture.

On the other hand, the force of Benvenisti's "point of no return" argument lies less in his characterization of what is currently happening in the West Bank and Gaza, and more in his projection of what will happen. Likud spokesmen may, as I have indicated, celebrate what they call Benvenisti's "scientific proof" that permanent absorption has already been accomplished, and Benvenisti may present himself as a professional researcher working only on the basis of the facts in the field. In the final analysis, however, there simply does not exist a theory of territorial integration, or of metropolitan development, or of

migratory behavior that can reliably predict such absorption.

In the absence of an adequate theory, Benvenisti and his staff have used plans--the plans of those in the World Zionist Organization, in Likud controlled ministries, and in Gush Emunim who have been trying with all their might to make annexation a reality. Indeed most of the maps and tables in the Benvenisti study suggesting projections of Jewish settlement and land use patterns into the 1990's and beyond are based, wholly or in part, on these plans--especially the Master Plan for the Settlement of Samaria and Judea: Development Plan for the Area for the years 1983-86. [80] This 134 page document was written under the direction of Haim Tzaban, Chairman of the Steering Committee for Master Plans for the Regional Councils of Judea and Samaria, whose staff works within the Land Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency. The plan was published, though closely held within government, Zionist Organization, and settler circles, in April 1983, under the imprimatur of the World Zionist Organization and the Agriculture Ministry. Laudatory endorsements were published as separately written prefaces signed by Mikhael Dekel, then deputy minister of Agriculture and one of the most vigorous advocates of annexation within the government, and by Matitiyahu Drobles, a co-director of the Land Settlement Department closely identified with Gush Emunim. [81] The spirit in which the authors of this plan worked is captured by the Biblical verse quoted by Drobles at the end of his prefatory comments:

"Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built
O virgin of Israel...
and thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains
of Samaria. The planters shall plant, and shall
enjoy the fruit. (Jeremiah, 31, 4-5)"

Other earlier plans produced under the auspices of the World Zionist Organization, viz. The Industrial Zone Development Plan (undated--circa 1982) and the The One Hundred Thousand Plan (1981) are used as virtually the only sources for predictions made in one of Benvenisti's key staff papers, "Stagnation and Frontier: Arab and Jewish Industry in the West Bank," (Jerusalem: The West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), by Hillel Frisch and Yedidya Fraiman. This study is cited in The West Bank Data Project... to support projections of a dynamic Jewish industrial base in the West Bank suffocating small stagnant Arab industries. [82] Indeed the Frisch and Fraiman paper does conclude that Israel "should succeed" in transferring one-eighth of its industry to the West Bank. [83] But the reasoning behind this judgment is simply 1) that this is what the plans of the government and the World Zionist Organization say will happen within the next thirty years; and 2) that the Hashemite Kingdom

of Jordan "built most of their industry in the middle of a forlorn desert plateau," hence Israel's objective should be considered quite feasible.[84]

The plans I have mentioned, and other more detailed plans written in close consultation with settler councils for the development of specific areas of the West Bank, e.g. The Matei Benyamin Plan Development Plan, do have real value for understanding certain aspects of the overall problem. They are convincing evidence of annexationist visions and intentions. They are extraordinarily useful to scholars interested in the mind-set of sophisticated annexationists, to critics eager to discover weaknesses in the annexationist program, and to Arabs anxious to protect themselves and their property and livelihood. Indeed it is from such a perspective that I shall, below, discuss the 1983 Tzaban Plan--to help understand the developments which pro-annexationists believe would be decisive in the determination of the future of the West Bank.

For the moment, however, it is sufficient to appreciate the extent to which the image of a rapid and unstoppable absorption process that Benvenisti's work has conveyed is attributable to his extensive reproduction of the projections of annexationist minded planners--not as the optimistic visions of zealous believers, but as the sober judgments of professional planners. A more exact reading of Benvenisti's study, and of the staff papers on which it is based, than that typical of the journalists who have reported his findings to the public, shows just how skeptical one should be in accepting the planners' projections at face value. As valuable as these planning documents may be for a variety of purposes, they are not convincing evidence of what is actually likely to happen.

Benvenisti himself points out how unreliable Labor Party plans for Jewish settlement in the Jordan Valley were as predictors of what in fact happened. In the Jordan Valley, he writes, "The actual growth is 40 percent of the planned rate envisaged by the Jordan Valley Development Plan." [85] An earlier version of the 1983 plan, published as the "Drobes Plan" in 1978 and updated three years later, Benvenisti judges "not (to) have been a spectacular success." [86] Although, as I have indicated, he makes extensive use of the WZO-Israel Government Plan of 1983 to document his own projections, he also characterizes that plan's predictions of 47-55% annual growth rates in West Bank settlement from 1983-1986 as "grossly exaggerated." [87] He reports that "the settlement target of the WZO would not be reached before the mid-1990s and probably not until later, if at all." [88]

How, then, in the absence of a compelling theory of territorial integration, or of plans with a record of accuracy, does Benvenisti think to persuade the reader that absorption of the

West Bank has passed "the critical point"? What he argues is that, with respect to the "third phase" of West Bank settlement, calling for subsidized suburban communities for non-ideological, upwardly mobile Israelis, the plans will work. These plans, and in particular the 1983 Tzaban plan, predict that tens and eventually hundreds of thousands of Israelis will pour into the West Bank to take advantage of subsidized land and housing. By 1986 the plan says, 100,000 Jews will live in the West Bank, and within thirty years, from 600,000 to 800,000 (excluding Jerusalem).[89] The implicit expectation is that these new "settlers" will adapt their political views and voting behavior so as to insure Israeli control and eventual sovereignty.

But, once again, it is Benvenisti himself who provides good reason to wonder whether this approach to the "massive settlement" of the West Bank has any better hope of success than the previous failures. Rather than flatly predict its success, Benvenisti actually says no more than that the suburban settlement plan stands a "chance of being carried out with more success than the previous two plans." [90]

In fact, the planners themselves appear to have become disillusioned with their ability to design and guide the social, economic, and residential decisions of masses of people in such a complex and intensely political environment. In the spring of 1984, while the Likud government was still in power, one disgruntled planner in the Land Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency indicated that competition among different ministries, settler groups, and bureaucratic interests, devotion to short-term political payoffs as against long-term effectiveness, and the categorical unwillingness of most settlers to make the reality of the Arab presence a part of their planning, were contributing to a chaotic situation on the West Bank. As a consequence, he maintained, the objectives laid out in the Tzaban plan had already become unattainable. He compared this debacle to the well known failure of numerous plans to "Judaize the Galilee," none of which has succeeded in establishing an unassailable Jewish majority in that region. In the West Bank, as in the Galilee, "things just haven't worked out as we predicted." [91]

Contrary to the thrust of Benvenisti's argument and the explicit claims of right-wing politicians who have sought to exploit his work, economic motives may actually be less successful than ideological motives as inducements to settlement. There are, after all, inevitable and unavoidable risks in moving to what officially is territory held temporarily by Israel as a "belligerent occupier." Although corporate investments are guaranteed by the terms of government sponsored insurance programs against change in the political status of the area, private residential construction is not. Predictions that

more and more Israelis would be prepared to take or ignore those risks were based, in 1982 and 1983, on the expectation that an unambiguous annexationist climate would prevail, and be sufficient to reassure the faint-hearted that the future was secure. Further, the planners' predictions in 1983 that waves of new settlers would find or build their dream houses in the West Bank over the next 10 years, that a new "Silicon Valley" would emerge in the hills around Ariel, and/or that new roads would cut the driving time from the middle of the West Bank to Tel Aviv in half--all these assumed a continuing commitment of public funds to these ends. But these assumptions have proved mistaken: the national unity government has slowed its investment in settlements, and the Israeli public, far from protesting, has repeatedly indicated to pollsters that it prefers cutting budgets for West Bank settlements than for any other programs.[92]

Though largely ignored in public discussion of his position, Benvenisti does acknowledge the particular sensitivity to economic and political shifts of subsidized, suburban-style settlement. He notes that the amount of public investment allocated for the West Bank under the terms of the master plan "is almost triple the average annual investment in the West Bank between 1977-1983." He considers the plan feasible only if its 1986 objectives are postponed until 1990 and only "if it is perceived as the top priority national project for the 1980s." [93] Even then, he admits, the success of the effort would remain directly dependent on continuing increases in US economic aid.[94] Despite description of suburbanization trends within Israel itself and of the explicitly articulated intentions of annexationist planners to exploit these trends, Benvenisti does not flatly predict that masses of commuting Israelis will move to the West Bank. What he says, precisely, is that "it is not impossible that each year 10,000-15,000 suburbanites would move to new areas (in the West Bank) situated at the same distances (from metropolitan centers) as the outer ring (of Tel Aviv)." [95] But to say this flow is "not impossible," is not to say how likely, or unlikely, it will be. In the Benvenisti staff paper devoted to this topic: "Metropolitan Links between Israel and the West Bank," by Annette Hochstein (Jerusalem: The West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), the author begs the question of whether her projections of urban sprawl into the West Bank will occur or not by issuing the following sweeping caveat:

If the settlement process continues in the planned direction, and provided there is no major change in the macro-political sphere or catastrophic event to change the course of development, we are now witnessing the creation of one large metropolitan area from the coastal region of Israel eastward to western Samaria, and of a second smaller, but further developed area, in and around Jerusalem. [96]

In sum, there is considerable reason to take a skeptical view of the "irreversibility" thesis. Nor, as I have noted, does Benvenisti actually make so categorical a claim. In the end, he argues that it is not the weight of every day facts, nor the settlement in the West Bank of a specified "critical mass" of Jews, that will seal the area's fate, but the outcome of "domestic political struggles within the Israeli body politic." [97] His crucial contention is that the 115,000 Jewish settlers that he estimates will live in the West Bank in 1991, by throwing their electoral support to annexationist parties, will "constitute an effective barrier to any political alternative espousing territorial compromise." [98]

Benvenisti is correct to focus on the creation of "internal political facts" as decisive, but his image of a settler lobby large enough to veto political initiatives toward territorial compromise does not do justice to the complexity of the political processes involved, nor to the opportunities to intervene in those processes. One hundred thousand settlers, for example, means--subtracting children--50,000 voters. At most this represents three Knesset seats, and these votes would be divided among numerous parties, which already receive many of them. Hence their electoral significance is likely to be much smaller than might be supposed.

Moreover, if the only barrier to withdrawal from a territory is the political commitment of settlers who live there to the protection of their high standard of living, then withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, where no one predicts the Jewish presence will rise much above one percent, should be rather easy. Indeed few would argue that the electoral power of the 65,000 Jews who live in greater East Jerusalem is the most important barrier to compromise on that issue. The fact is that there are barriers to withdrawal other than settler lobbies, just as there are opportunities for extrication other than the explicit choice by an Israeli government to negotiate and implement a territorial compromise.

The analytical challenge is to consider the process of de facto annexation in a way that acknowledges the real limits that have been placed on Israel's options by the drastic changes settlement and other policies have wrought, while at the same time encouraging consideration of trajectories other than permanent absorption which the complexity of the factors involved and the fundamental malleability of the political realm make possible. Before attempting to provide a conceptualization which meets these requirements it is necessary briefly to consider several studies, other than Benvenisti's, which shed further light on the problem.

Summary of the findings of each of these studies will be followed by analysis of the contribution that each makes to understanding the evolving relationship between Israel and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A concluding section will draw together these insights in the context of an approach to the problem of de facto annexation and its reversal which avoids both the "point of no return" and the "all options are open" fallacies.

Haim Tzaban, et. al, Master Plan for the Settlement of Samaria and Judea: Development Plan for the Area for the Years 1983-86
(Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization Settlement Department and State of Israel Ministry of Agriculture, 1983)

As noted above this document was relied on heavily by Benvenisti and his staff for their study of the West Bank and its likely future relationship to Israel. However it has never been independently analyzed. Israeli and American journalists who have reported its findings have either quoted selectively, and sensationally, from its projections, or relied on Benvenisti's own interpretation of the plan. Although in no sense a binding document on the Israeli government, especially in light of the emergence of the "National Unity Government" in August 1984, with Shimon Peres as Prime Minister, the document remains significant because it represents the best efforts of an annexationist minded government and sympathetic experts in the World Zionist Organization to describe how the permanent absorption of the West Bank can be achieved. Analysis of the explicit and implicit assumptions behind the plan can reveal what factors are most likely to interfere with achievement of its objectives and suggest how likely those objectives are to be attained.

The document itself actually contains two plans. The first is a "Master Plan for the Year 2010." The objective of this plan, stated at the outset, and repeated a dozen times throughout the entire document, is

To establish throughout areas of settlement importance the greater part of a large Jewish population, at a low level of national expenditure and in a relatively short span of time by realizing the settlement potential of Samaria and Judea, and to integrate them within the country-wide system in various sectors.[99]

Specifically the "Master Plan" envisions 500,000 Jews living in the West Bank (outside greater East Jerusalem) in 2010 along with necessary infrastructural facilities, services, and employment opportunities. The "Development Plan for 1983-86" is a more detailed document setting out the construction, land acquisition, settlement, and investment targets for the next three years, consistent with the overall requirements of the Master Plan.[100] According to the "Development Plan" its "main objective" is "to create the conditions for the completion of the settlement of 100,000 Jews in Samaria and Judea." [101]. Both Mattitياهو Drobles and Mikhael Dekel (see above p.) emphasize this goal in their introductory remarks. It is also noted that to meet this goal some 80,000 Jews, or 20-25,000 per year would have to be settled in the area from 1983-1986.[102]

The "Master Plan" envisions between 900,000 and 1.4 million Arabs as living in the West Bank in 2010, depending on whether Arab emigration rates are high or not. These population figures are themselves somewhat startling in that even if the plan is implemented in full a large Arab majority (65-75%) is anticipated to remain in the West Bank in 2010. Most news reports have headlined projections showing the anticipated Arab and Jewish populations as approximately equal (1.1-1.3m Jews vs. 1.1-1.6m Arabs) by 2010. But these reports are based on the addition of the total population of greater Eastern and western (Jewish) Jerusalem to the West Bank total.[103]

Although the overall document concludes with the judgment that the plan should be considered as in the "conceptual" stage, the man most responsible for its production, Mattitياهو Drobles, predicted, in his introductory remarks, that just as the plan he had set forth in 1978, to build 60 settlements in the West Bank by 1981, had been achieved, "so shall we accomplish what is set forth here, both in the three and thirty year plans." Speaking for the Government, Mikhael Dekel wrote, in his introduction, that the Plan was advanced "within the framework of the government's overall policy to settle Samaria and Judea."

Neither the thirty year "Master Plan" nor the three year "Development Plan" include justification for the effort to integrate the West Bank into Israel, though the security significance and the ideological importance of the project are alluded to at the outset. Nor do the plans concern themselves with political or legal problems involved in absorbing the areas and their populations, or with the international ramifications. The problem is posed as a technical planning problem in which techniques for engineering the transfer of hundreds of thousands of Jews, and the containment of hundreds of thousands of Arabs within the localities that they presently inhabit, must be fashioned consistent with limits on resources and time.

One of the fundamental constraints faced by the planners is the absence of a substantial pool of ideologically committed Jews willing to move from Israel proper to the West Bank in order to accomplish supreme ideological or national objectives. Nor do the planners assume that large scale Jewish immigration will bring masses of Jews to Israel--Jews willing to accept housing wherever they may be given it.

The strategy for achieving the stated objectives in spite of these constraints, is described in detail in these plans, and represents a self-conscious departure from techniques of pioneering settlement pursued by the World Zionist Organization and Israeli governments for decades. By granting generous subsidies, discounts, and tax breaks, by allocating more land and

housing space per capita, and by ensuring that services available in West Bank communities, including health care, education, transportation, and recreation, are better than those available in the rest of the country, the planners intend to exploit Israeli desires to improve living standards in order to induce tens of thousands of Jewish families to move from the coastal plain into the West Bank. In this context private capital, and the ambitions of contractors and real estate developers, are to be tapped in order to reduce the overall requirements for expenditures by government ministries and "national institutions" (mainly the World Zionist Organization).

A great deal of attention is devoted to delineating the areas of the West Bank in which relatively larger subsidies and "national" investments should be directed. Two sets of criteria are used:

- Intensity of demand (high, intermediate, and low) to live in a particular area based on relative proximity to Israeli metropolitan centers, distance from Arab towns and villages, and comfort of climate
- Importance of settlement (high, intermediate, low, and negative) based on the contribution settlement in a particular area can make to enhance the continuity of Jewish settlement, raise the level of services offered to Jewish settlers, or block growth of Arab residential expansion

The logic employed by the planners is that as areas of high importance but relatively low attractiveness are made increasingly attractive through national investments in services and higher subsidies for housing construction and industrial investment, Israelis will be more motivated to move into them, thereby permitting levels of national expenditure, including subsidies, to be lowered and/or directed to other less attractive but high priority areas.

It is the explicitness of this logic which makes it possible, now, two and a half years after the beginning of the planning period, to evaluate the plan as a realistic picture of the West Bank's future.

The two plans emphasize that national expenditures in general, and road construction in particular, are the most important factors that will determine the success of the enterprise. In spite of the fact that, as the planners recognize, 100% of the investment in roads must be national (not private) expenditure, it is the construction of such roads, and that alone, which can give to the whole process the self-fulfilling dynamic so necessary to the realization of the planners' objectives.

By facilitating rapid travel from the metropolitan areas of Israel into the West Bank on roads which bypass Arab population centers, Israelis can quickly come to view the West Bank as a safe, familiar, readily accessible, and natural extension of the metropolitan and semi-suburban areas they presently inhabit. By noting what progress has or has not been made toward the construction of roads given particularly high and immediate priority in the plan, and by comparing levels of "national expenditure" stipulated in the plan with those presently committed to settlement related projects in the West Bank, a general sense of the reliability of this plan as a portrayal of the future can be gleaned.

The overall estimated cost of the development plan to settle the West Bank in the years 1983-1986 is \$2,583,000,000. In spite of the official emphasis on the exploitation of private capital, 60% of this total, \$1,550,676,000, is to be national expenditure. As total figures (for three, not thirty, years) these are astounding amounts. The combined private and public cost of each of the 80,000 Jewish settlers slated for the West Bank in this period is \$32,287,500, of which \$19,375,000 is to be spent by the government and such quasi governmental bodies as the World Zionist Organization.

The enormous scale of the expenditures these planners envisioned, and the unreality of their estimates, can be appreciated by considering what they recommend as the annual "national" investment in West Bank settlement related projects, approximately \$450,000,000, in relation to some other figures.[104] That represents, for example, between three and four times government expenditure on settlements in the West Bank during the 1982/83 fiscal year.[105] Following implementation of some of the national unity government's cost cutting measures Mattitiyahu Drobles stated that the entire budget of the World Zionist Organization's Land Settlement Department for Judea, Samaria, and the Jordan Valley was \$14.1 million, or only 3% of the required resources.[106] Obviously the overwhelming proportion of funds were to have come, and must come if they are to come at all, directly from government sources. In July 1985, however, it was reported that after budget cuts, and allowing for inflation, the 1985 government budget for settlements in the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights was only \$24 million--a bit over 5% of the government expenditures required by the development plan for the West Bank alone.[107] Indeed the annual total of private and public expenditure on West Bank settlement projected in the Tzaban plan equals 19% of Israel's gross national product in 1983.[108]

One reason for the relative magnitude of these sums is the high proportion of infrastructural investment, in roads and in industrial parks, which the planners indicate must be made in the

first years of the thirty year plan in order to induce Israelis to move to the West Bank of their own volition. [109] Of highest priority, again, is the construction of roads. "Highways," say the planners,

are the most efficient means for realizing the development potential (of the area)...The success of the whole development plan requires drastic reform in the system of priorities for highways...and in the establishment of a system of priorities for budgets and an unequivocal schedule for implementation.[110]

Indeed the "Development Plan" calls for the construction of 132 kilometers of highway related to the West Bank settlement project in 1983/1984 at a cost of \$38.5 million and of 264 kilometers of highway in 1985/86 at a cost of \$76.2 million.[111] The size of these investments can be appreciated if compared to the total length of non-local roadway constructed throughout all of Israel in 1983--65.6 kilometers, and the total amount spent on road construction in the entire country in 1982--\$28 million.note(SA #35, p. 498 p. 528 translate into dollars by finding the average exchange rate for 1982). The development plan also includes a list of some 36 road projects to be completed by the end of the three year planning period, each ranked from 1-30 according to the priority system devised by the planners.[112] It is instructive to note what has become of some of the projects listed as of the highest priority.

The projects of the very highest priority (given a ranking of 30 out of 30) were those intended to connect the main highway north of Tel Aviv with the Trans-Samaria highway, by-passing congested suburbs and Arab areas. In 1981 the Trans-Samaria highway was already under construction. In the Israel Government Yearbook for 1983/84 work on the project was said to be "continuing." [113] In April 1985, more than half way through the development plan planning period, Housing and Construction Minister David Levi was still promising settlers in Qarne Shomron, located in that section of the West Bank to be served by the highway, that "despite budget cuts, the paving of the Trans-Samaria road will be completed." [114] Among the sections of the road not yet completed are precisely those connecting the highway to the main thorough-fare north of Tel Aviv to which the planners accorded such a high priority.

Another project included within the high priority category is a by-pass road on the main north-south axis of the West Bank permitting traffic to go around and not through the Arab city of Nablus. In January 1985 the Israeli military announced that a \$400 million plan to pave a series of lateral roads in the West Bank, consistent with those described within the development plan, was being shelved because of lack of funds. Prominent

among those projects to be abandoned was the by-pass road near Nablus.[115] Further evidence that even the most basic requirements of the development plan--those involving road construction--are not and will not be met is the announcement in June 1985, that among the 14,000 public sector employees (6% of the total) to be fired by the government in a money saving measure would be included one third of the work force of the agency in charge of road construction.[116]

The point, however, is not simply that the targets set by the development plan are unrealistic. Analysis of the logic of the plan in relationship to developments since the plan was issued illustrate the fundamental difficulties which confront any attempt to engineer substantial change in the demographic composition of the West Bank. Both the development plan and the master plan of which it is a part assumed that not only sympathetic governments, but governments devoted to annexation as a national mission of the utmost significance, would remain in power, that resources would be available for high priority projects, and that "a central planning agency, with full authority granted from the highest echelons and responsible for the success of the plan"[117] would be established. With the emergence of the Labor Party dominated unity government, the economic crisis, and the disappearance of even a semblance of central coordination with the demise of the Interministerial Committee on Settlement, each of these assumptions has been contradicted. This suggests that any plan for the future of the West Bank that focuses on technical, infrastructural, and demographic questions, to the exclusion of political and basic economic factors, cannot be relied upon.[118]

On the other hand, the very existence of these plans, systematic attempts by serious people to orchestrate and implement a comprehensive effort toward the absorption of the West Bank, shows how far Israel's relationship to the West Bank has come from the days when most planning and speculation had to do with which small parts of the area might be retained when a settlement was reached. In the context of these plans significant population centers have been established in areas that cannot be retained if a territorial compromise is ever to be implemented--cities such as Ariel, Qarne Shomron, and Immanuel, in central Samaria, Maale Adumim between Jerusalem and Jericho, and Ephrat, between Bethlehem and Hebron. The thousands of Israelis who live in these cities have powerful interests in seeing that they remain forever under Israeli jurisdiction.[119]

The planners also show an impressive commitment to serious long range planning when they mark off certain areas of the West Bank (in the Latrun area and nearest to Tel Aviv) within which Jewish settlement would have a "negative" impact (by drawing settlers from politically more important areas and by destroying the

potential for a central recreational "green" area).[120] This same commitment is also manifest in the planners' unprecedentedly attentive, and, in the annexationist camp context, rather controversial, treatment of the Arab sector, and its future patterns of growth. By discussing even in a limited way, the requirements of the Arab population, the planners display their own confidence in the future and their realization that success cannot be achieved if the hard demographic realities of the area are not confronted. Previous plans simply ignored the Arab population as a factor which might be relevant to the future of the area, even referring to West Bank Arabs as "the minorities." [121]

While the plans contained in the Tzaban document subordinate the aspirations and development needs of the Arab population to those of the Jewish population, and allocate water, land, and other resources in a vastly disproportionate way to favor Jewish settlers, there is real acknowledgement that plans for absorption of the area will inevitably go awry if their impact on Arab choices about where to work and live are not taken into account. In this context the plans are instructive for the general image they project of a large West Bank Arab population which, if dealt with non-provocatively, but firmly, can be made to live quietly within the State of Israel--physically separated from the Jewish population, making few demands on the resources of the state, and prepared to accept strict limitations on its freedom of development in return for peace, jobs, and a slowly increasing standard of living. This image, modelled on the rather unproblematic relationship of effective control which the Jewish majority inside the green line has maintained over the Arab minority remaining from 1948, is an important asset to the annexationist camp in its continuing struggle within Israeli society to determine the fate of the occupied territories.[122]

Simcha Bahiri, Peaceful Separation or Enforced Unity: Economic Consequences for Israel and the West Bank/Gaza Area (Tel Aviv: International Center for Peace in the Middle East, February 1984)

The problem addressed in this study, written at the beginning of 1984, is posed against the dense network of economic ties that have developed over the last seventeen years between Israel and the occupied territories. Bahiri asks whether the economic impact of Israeli disengagement from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, compared to the permanent integration of those territories, would be economically advantageous or disadvantageous. The problem is simplified by considering two sharply differentiated trajectories--separation or integration--and by excluding more complex "mixed" options of territorial division of the areas, administrative sharing arrangements, bi-nationalism, etc. The time frame for the analysis is 1985-1995.

The study begins with an explanation of the macro-economic model to be employed and a list of the assumptions that will be used to drive it. Twelve statistical tables illustrate projections of various economic, social, and demographic indicators for each of the two options, compared to a 1982 baseline. The bulk of the monograph is an explication of those tables, concluding that on virtually every dimension the "separation" option (i.e. Israeli disengagement) would be preferable to the economic consequences of "enforced unity," i.e., "that the demographic and economic structure of the country would be in a more favourable condition without the territories." [123]

Bahiri's study differs from numerous earlier studies focusing on the economic relationship between Israel and the occupied territories in that Bahiri examines the economic consequences of integration or separation for Israel. He does not ask whether, given separation, a Palestinian entity of some sort in those areas would be "viable" or whether the set of economic relationships that presently obtain "benefit or burden" the Israeli economy. [124] His conclusion, that separation of the West Bank and Gaza from Israel would be associated with the development of a viable Palestinian economy in those areas, is consistent with the findings of earlier studies.

Bahiri's conclusions flow rather unsurprisingly from the assumptions which he makes about the effect of Israeli disengagement on such key economic and social indicators as investment, Jewish immigration, available export markets, defense expenditure levels, and labor productivity. Each of these elements of economic performance is seen to be enhanced by "separation" and degraded by "integration." An important factor

in his reasoning is the argument that Israeli disengagement will be associated with regional peace, lower security risks, wider ties of trade and investment with Israel's neighbor's, and a more attractive environment for Jewish immigration.

More important from the point of view of the present investigation are the claims Bahiri makes about the conditions under which "separation" would be either achievable or impossible. Bahiri addresses this question explicitly, if not entirely consistently. Referring directly to Benvenisti's work Bahiri asserts that the Likud government's settlement policies, and in particular its encouragement of the trend toward "suburban sprawl" as a vehicle for settlement and incorporation, had reduced the amount of time within which the option of "separation" might be exercised. At one point he writes that "unless settlement is halted" separation will not be possible "much beyond" 1985.[125] In January 1984, at any rate, he viewed separation as rapidly becoming very difficult to achieve. At a later point in his discussion he adds another condition to the set of circumstances which must be created by some time in 1985 if the separation option is ever to be implemented. Not only must there be a "freeze on settlement," but "active negotiation" toward a comprehensive peace settlement must be underway; otherwise "by 1985, it would appear that the 'unity,' or Israel, option will have been chosen--if only by default." [126]

There has been a rather major slowdown in Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank since early 1984. On the other hand, Bahiri's projection of 40,000 settlers in the West Bank by mid-1985--a figure which he writes would represent a continuation of the trends he sees as foreclosing the separation option--appears to be correct.[127] In April 1985 it was reliably reported that 42,600 Jewish settlers lived in the West Bank outside of the greater East Jerusalem area.[128] Nor, late in 1985, in spite of the usual mix of diplomatic feelers and speculation, are serious negotiations toward a comprehensive peace underway. Thus, according to Bahiri's own criteria, the separation option would seem to have vanished.

But Bahiri draws back from such a clear prediction. At one point he characterizes as an assumption of his analysis that separation of Israel from the West Bank and Gaza after 1985 would be "extremely costly" (not "impossible"--author).[129] Though seen at other points in his analysis as possible only "if carried out within the next two years," separation from the West Bank and Gaza is characterized, in his conclusion, as an event which "domestic and international realities may make...inevitable." [130] In this context, he argues, separation sooner rather than later would be "less costly" (not "more possible"--author).[131]

Bahiri excludes from his treatment any attempt to analyze the political dynamics of the two trajectories he compares. He explicitly excludes discussion of the fate of existing Jewish settlements under the "separation" option, and avoids, without explanation, the question of whether and how greater East Jerusalem, including the large Jewish neighborhoods constructed there since 1967, would be relinquished or retained by Israel under the separation option he favors.

The limitations of Bahiri's treatment illustrate the drawbacks associated with an economic or economistic approach to a problem that is primarily political. Such an approach often biases the analyst and the reader to think in linear, continuous terms, involving smoothly rising or falling costs, payable in some sort of purely fungible social currency. But the kinds of disruptions, difficulties, obstacles, and opportunities which eventual stabilization of Israel's relationship to the West Bank and Gaza will entail are not readily traceable in linear terms. Risks of civil unrest, change in the ideological fabric of the state, threats to the legal order, episodes of dramatic leadership, and the impact of international or regional convulsions are not susceptible to cost/benefit analysis. Such analysis assumes, for example, a common hierarchy of objectives against which different possible outcomes can be measured and an "optimal" choice made. Some of the most important elements of the relationship between Israel and the occupied territories, however, involve disputes over the nature of those values on the basis of which Israeli society as a whole should make decisions.

To think clearly and carefully about the future of Israel's relationship to the territories requires an approach which combines a notion of costs that do increase or decrease over time, with concepts that can help identify break-points, or "thresholds" at which the problem can be transformed in much more basic ways.

Aryeh Shalev, Defense Line in the West Bank (Hebrew) (Israel: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1982)

Aryeh Shalev is a Colonel (reserve) in the Israel Defense Forces. He served in the IDF for thirty years. From 1967 to 1974 he directed the research department of Israeli military intelligence, and from 1974 to 1976 was attached to the West Bank command. In 1978 he assumed his current post as a senior member of the staff of the Institute for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

This book is a detailed military assessment of the security threats Israel faces along its frontier with Jordan. It is well known in Israeli military and intelligence circles and highly regarded. Since 1982 Shalev has authored a number of short articles distilled from his book for some Israeli English language publications. Only within the last few months has the book appeared in an English language edition (Praeger 1985). No thorough discussion of its findings, however, is presently available. [132]

The book is divided into five chapters. Chapter One evaluates the strategic and tactical implications of West Bank topography as it relates to the task of defending Israel against attack from the East. Chapter Two discusses the changing balance of forces available to Israel and the "Eastern Front," primarily Jordan and Iraq. Currently available force levels, threats associated with them, and those projected as likely during the 1980's, are compared to those prevailing in 1967 and 1973. Chapter Three analyzes specific types of security problems that could arise following Israeli disengagement from the West Bank (artillery bombardment, terrorist infiltration, reduced warning time, etc.) and possible counter-measures. Chapter Four discusses the security significance of Jewish settlements in the West Bank. Chapter Five evaluates different proposals for the solution of Israel's security problems on the Eastern Front, viz. demilitarization, small IDF reconnaissance stations, the Allon Plan, the Sharon Plan, and his own recommendations.

Those recommendations, which taken together might be termed the "Shalev Plan," are:

- that Israeli security can be enhanced over present levels by moving toward a peace settlement with Jordan and a political solution to the Palestinian problem;
- that key Palestinian political requirements can be satisfied without prejudicing Israel's vital security interests;
- that minimal and mutual border changes would be included in

the settlement, but that the 1949 armistice line would form the basis of the new border;

- that a decades long "transitional period" would follow the signing of an accord and precede the onset of a full and final peace;
- that demilitarization of the West Bank, even if accompanied by United States guarantees, cannot provide Israel with a necessary margin of safety;
- that of decisive significance in defense against a surprise Arab attack and against terrorism during this transitional period, would be rights to station two IDF brigades along the Jordan River, in fortifications on the Eastern slopes of the West Bank mountains (north of the Dead Sea), and in radar and electronic sensing stations on selected high points along the mountain ridge.

Additional recommendations, regarding limitations on Arab heavy and advanced weapons in the West Bank, the location of Jordanian forces in the East Bank, and United States guarantees, are also detailed.

Although the study is primarily a professional military assesment, political considerations are integrated into the analysis. Indeed Shalev's ability to make his political assumptions explicit, and to integrate the implications of those assumptions into his analysis of Israel's security problems, is what separates his study from many others focusing on security issues. The most significant of the political judgments Shalev makes are

- that Israel's peace relationship with Egypt, and hence its security interests, will be endangered without a political solution to the Palestinian problem;
- that retaliation and threats to take from Palestinians the political gains they will have made following a settlement, will be more effective techniques for dealing with residual terrorism than Israeli policing of the entire West Bank;
- that United States guarantees without large numbers of troops stationed permanently in the West Bank would not be dependable enough to ensure Israeli security, but that with those troops stationed there Israel's political dependence on the United States would be intolerable;
- that Jordan and the Palestinians will refuse to accept

either the Sharon Plan (entailing Israeli control of 3/4 of the West Bank) or the Allon Plan (entailing Israeli control of 2/5 of the West Bank) as a serious basis for a negotiated settlement;

- that regardless of the political difficulties that West Bank settlers will create for any Israeli government seeking to evacuate settlements or place them under Arab rule, withdrawal of Israeli political authority from virtually all of the West Bank is possible and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future.

Operationally, the primary criteria Shalev uses to evaluate various proposals are whether the proposed arrangements can serve as a serious basis for negotiations while also

- providing 6-12 hours of warning time for Israel of a major Arab attack, thereby permitting Israeli reserve mobilization processes to be protected by the Israeli air force;
- making it impossible for large Arab military formations or infiltrating terrorists to cross the Jordan River, ascend the eastern slopes of the West Bank, and reach heavily populated Arab areas in one night.

On the basis of these assumptions and criteria, and excluding the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons in the next Arab-Israeli war, Shalev makes a convincing argument that Israeli security can be protected against surprise attack from the East by either annexing substantial chunks of the West Bank, specifically Maale Adumim (15 km east of Jerusalem), a five kilometer strip running along Israel's "narrow waist," the Jordan Valley, and the Etzion Bloc between south of Bethlehem, or the stationing of two Israeli brigades in carefully chosen and prepared locations in sparsely populated areas (along the Jordan River, on the Eastern slopes overlooking junctions of roads running from Jordan River bridges to the "Allon Road," and on mountain peaks along the central ridge). Of these two alternatives Shalev argues that the second, based on rights to remain in specified areas during a long "transition period," but not on sovereignty, could be acceptable to the Arab side, while substantial transfers of territory to Israeli sovereignty would not.

There are certain important flaws in Shalev's analysis. Although he indicates his judgement that the Arabs will not accept any arrangement which does not include an Arab political presence in East Jerusalem, he strongly implies that it will remain Israeli, in part by suggesting that its defense is what makes Israeli annexation of the Etzion Bloc necessary. He never resolves this contradiction in his position. Additionally, his

recommendation that the Etzion Bloc be retained in order to protect Jerusalem from attack from the south clashes with one of his criticisms of the Allon plan, that it envisions threats in the south that do not exist while failing to appreciate the seriousness of the threats in the central and northern sectors of the West Bank. Nor is his discussion of settlements as thorough as his discussion of other issues. Little attempt is made systematically to evaluate possible contribution which different settlements, in different parts of the West Bank, might make to security. He repeatedly notes the security significance of internal Israeli unity and high morale, but beyond noting that proposals to evacuate Jewish settlements or place under them under Arab rule would trigger sharp political controversy within Israel, he makes no attempt to outline political strategies which might enable an Israeli government to move toward the kind of arrangements he recommends, while avoiding or containing the political difficulties their implementation would entail. Nor, finally, does he discuss security problems that may be associated with Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip.

On the other hand, from the point of view of this discussion of the extent to which options other than Israeli absorption of the West Bank have been rendered impossible, Shalev's analysis provides important insights.

First, from a professional military point of view, if it were seen as impossible to provide a basis for serious negotiations toward Israeli disengagement from the West Bank without exposing Israel to intolerable or even high security risks, then Israel could not be made to move away from de facto annexation except under extreme duress. Shalev's study thus provides a necessary, though not sufficient basis for a political struggle within Israel to reverse the trend toward de facto annexation of the West Bank.

Second, from neither a political nor a military point of view does Shalev consider the 23,000 Jewish settlers who resided in 85 settlements in the West Bank at the time of his writing, nor the larger number that he anticipated would be present in the West Bank during the mid-1980's, a decisively difficult obstacle to the implementation of various options--including those, such as total demilitarization, which would be less favorable for Israel than his own plan. Shalev classifies the security role of settlements as minor. Indeed he judges that settlements distributed in the West Bank outside areas controlled by the IDF, exposed to attack in time of war and requiring the evacuation of women and children, would likely prove to be security liabilities, not assets. Shalev does indicate that if settlement blocs emerge which contain large Jewish populations their security significance would be enhanced. However, given the uncertainties about the future of the West Bank, Shalev did not

believe (in 1982) that such dramatic growth was possible.[133] Within the framework of his own recommendations, settlements inside the zones occupied by the IDF during the transitional period could remain if integrated within the defensive deployments on the same "temporary" basis. Other settlements would, according to Shalev, either be evacuated or placed under Arab rule. Nor, argues Shalev, would it be necessary to maintain Israeli settlements along the Trans-Samarian highway, in the heart of the densely Arab populated northern bulge of the West Bank. According to the deployments recommended by Shalev the key roads and junctions are east of the mountain ridge, not west of it. Indeed Arab control of the Trans-Samarian highway is explicitly mentioned.[134]

Finally, and of particular interest, is Shalev's proposal that Israel facilitate an agreement with the Jordanians and/or the Palestinians by holding itself ready to make mutual border adjustments. Shalev is suggesting, in other words, that while the Latrun salient, Gush Etzion, and some other points of tactical significance might be included within Israel's new borders, some areas within the Green Line, heavily settled by Arabs, could be turned over to Arab rule--either Jordanian or Palestinian. This willingness to think in such fluid terms about the location of Israel's borders implies Shalev's belief that such considerations would not be held to be beyond the pale of discussion in Israeli circles. This itself is an important indication that imaginative political deals, including Arab concessions on politically, emotionally, or security significant Jewish settlements, in return for Arab rule of areas (such as Wadi Ara on the Green Line southeast of Haifa) included within the borders of Israel from 1949-1967, might yet be possible.

Mark A. Heller, A Palestinian State: The Implications for Israel
(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983)

Mark Heller is an American trained political scientist and a member of the staff of the Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University. His book is written from the point of view of Israeli interests, defined as the preservation of a democratic Jewish state, with a stable internal order, within secure and recognized boundaries. It is the most comprehensive attempt to date to evaluate the opportunities and risks which different proposals for resolving the West Bank/Gaza/Palestinian problem entail for Israel.

Heller measures continuation of the status quo against a variety of other options, including federative formulas, the Allon plan, return of the West Bank and Gaza to Jordan, a Palestinian state without the PLO, and a Palestinian state with the PLO. The analytical technique employed is cost-benefit analysis, in the context of which Heller seeks to establish trade-offs pertaining to different but related Israeli interests. Since none of the important trade-offs which Heller identifies can be quantified, the conclusions he reaches are fundamentally judgmental, but he does systematically identify the hard choices entailed in the comparison of different options, is often imaginative in his use of evidence in establishing the relative plausibility of his various scenarios, and is generally successful in substantiating his evaluative claims.

His conclusion is that a neutral and essentially demilitarized Palestinian state, with borders based on the 1949 armistice lines, established through secret negotiations with the PLO, and legitimized by wider agreements with other Arab states, is on balance the best of Israel's politico-military alternatives. He envisions a five to ten year transition period during which Israeli forces will be stationed in key areas of the West Bank. He warns that domestic opposition in Israel is the chief obstacle to this solution and that as time passes the situation is becoming "progressively less reversible." [135] In this context he urges that Israel pursue "on an urgent basis" the negotiated establishment of a Palestinian state as "the primary goal of its foreign and security policy." [136]

Like Shalev, Heller sees the Palestinian problem as the most serious long-term threat to Israel's security interests--not because of projected Palestinian capabilities (Both Shalev and Heller view Palestinian terrorism as a minor problem in the overall strategic and political equation.)--but because (like Shalev) he believes that without a solution to the political problem of the Palestinians acceptable to elites in the moderate Arab states, major Arab-Israeli wars will occur. Given the long

range demographic, economic, and military preponderance of the Arab world, both these analysts judge the cumulative risk of such wars to be intolerable for Israel. Heller is much less specific about the military requirements for a stable peace, but follows Shalev in his argument that settlements are likely to be security liabilities rather than assets, that territorial division of the West Bank as envisioned by the Allon plan is not a basis for serious negotiations with the Arab side, that with minor and mutual territorial adjustments the 1949 armistice line should serve as the basis for the new border, and that electronic surveillance installations need to be established on high points along the West Bank's central mountain ridge even after Israeli withdrawal.

Heller differs sharply from Shalev in preferring virtual demilitarization of the West Bank and Gaza after a relatively brief "transition period," to the establishment of IDF controlled security zones in sparsely populated areas for a much longer period. Heller also makes a strong argument against Jordanian rule of the West Bank, and for a Palestinian state there. Shalev is ready to accept either.

Heller's analysis of Israel's economic stake in maintaining control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is similar to Bahiri's in his judgment that no irreparable harm could come to the Israeli economy as a result of disengagement. Unlike Bahiri, however, Heller does see a possibility of some problems arising--particularly with regard to the impact restrictions on access to West Bank and Gaza markets would have on certain light industrial sectors of the Israeli economy, and with regard to the protection of Israeli water supplies.

Heller explicitly rejects "federative" or "shared rule" arrangements for Israeli-West Bank-Gaza Strip relations, but like Bahiri and Benvenisti, he demonstrates a serious concern that with the passage of time, the construction of more settlements, and the transfer of more Jews to the territories, the de facto annexation of these areas is becoming increasingly more difficult to halt. But as is also true of the work of Bahiri and Benvenisti, Heller's treatment suffers from an inadequate conceptual framework. At one point in his discussion of Jerusalem Heller admits that cost-benefit analysis requires that a choice be made in terms of objectives that have a higher priority than anything at stake in the choice itself. It is in this context that he questions whether it is possible for Israelis to compromise at all on their demands for symbolic rule of the entire city, and if not whether rational choice on the issue, measuring the relative costs and benefits of different options, is possible. If not, his techniques of analysis are irrelevant.

In fact Heller contradicts his own observations with respect to Jerusalem by proceeding to apply those techniques to that problem, and even, inter alia, suggesting that a portion of what was annexed in 1967 as greater East Jerusalem be reunited with the "West Bank." [137] But a more important difficulty in his discussion is that he virtually ignores precisely those dimensions of the West Bank/Gaza Strip/Palestinian problem which can make cost-benefit calculations irrelevant. What is emerging in Israel is a deep, polarizing, and fundamental division, not so much over whether this or that method for dealing with the West Bank and Gaza Strip would serve Israeli interests better, but whether it is legitimate to exclude those territories from the national patrimony by subordinating their fate, even hypothetically, to security, economics, demographics, or any other supposedly "vital interest." It is convictions such as this, borne of ideological commitment and habit, but reinforced, especially for West Bank and Gaza settlers, by personal vested interests, that are making the problem so intractable.

Implicitly, Heller recognizes this, but he fails to face the problem squarely. In his discussion of settlements he notes that the objective of the Likud government was to make separation of the West Bank and Gaza from Israel impossible under any circumstances, and that the threat of domestic political opposition, including civil strife, was already the most serious obstacle to implementing his recommended policies. In 1982, at the time of writing, he admitted that Jewish settlements already established had turned the West Bank "into a crazy quilt of intermingled Jewish and Arab areas which, if subject to separate sovereign authority, would produce a political, administrative, and economic situation of nightmarish and probably untenable complexity." [138] This implies that only by dismantling Jewish settlements would the type of peace settlement Heller recommends be possible. But he also argues that "the bitterness engendered by the Sinai withdrawal...makes Israeli acceptance of another arrangement involving the forcible evacuation of settlers virtually inconceivable." [139]

Thus Heller does not seem to take his own observations about the threat of internal political upheaval seriously. He conducts a cost benefit analysis of the settlement policy, finds it a wasteful allocation of resources, and proceeds with his argument. His cost benefit approach, and the stress which he places on the details of available options and their mode of implementation, deflect sustained analytical attention from consideration of the predicament created for Israel by the scale and fundamentalist nature of internal opposition to withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. Whether a situation becoming "progressively less reversible" might at some point become "irreversible" is not discussed; nor are the constraints on "rational" policy-making represented by ideologically based,

settler supported commitments to maintain permanent Israeli rule of the territories at any cost.

Shmuel Sandler and Hillel Frisch, Israel, the Palestinians, and the West Bank (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1984)

The authors of this volume are members of the staff of the Jerusalem Institute for Federal Studies, which since 1976 has published a large number of studies of the West Bank and Gaza problem. The book is the most recent of these studies, all reflecting the influence of the President of the Institute, Daniel Elazar. All have advanced solutions to the problem which rely on elaborate arrangements for "sharing power" among Israelis, Palestinians, and Jordanians, rather than territorial division, return of the territories in toto to Arab rule, or formal annexation. The approach has generated some interest because of its similarity to ideas articulated by the late Moshe Dayan and because of the support it has received from some "centrist" figures in both the Labor Party and Likud. It has also been controversial because it has been widely interpreted as offering a palatable and sophisticated facade for effective Israeli annexation, minus citizenship rights for West Bank and Gaza Arabs.

Sandler and Frisch direct substantial attention to the settlement program of the first Likud government from 1977-1981, but although the book was published in 1984, no attempt is made to analyze the effects of the rapid expansion of settlement during the second Likud term. Yet with respect to developments up to the summer of 1981 they do pose the question clearly: "To what extent," they ask, "did Sharon's pattern of settlement render repartition of the West Bank impracticable?"[140] Their answer is that territorial division of the areas had become impossible without dismantling many established settlements, but that the weak economic and demographic basis of these settlements made them less than a decisive obstacle to partition or shared rule. Anticipating further development of the settlements in the second Likud term the authors say only that "this network of settlements, if they develop and become viable, will make any partition in the future more difficult."[141]

As does Benvenisti, Sandler and Frisch argue that developments since the mid-1970's, and in particular since the rise of Likud to power in 1977, have made the West Bank/Gaza Strip/Palestinian problem as much an internal or "inter-communal" issue for Israel, as it is an "inter-state" issue. But in the end the authors of this volume are unclear as to whether it is already too late to reach a partition or "shared rule" solution. In their conclusion they comment that "none of the traditional resolutions to communal conflict--integration, power-sharing, or partition--seems realistic." At the same time, warning of the disastrous consequences of continued deadlock, they hold out the hope that "the ramifications of such a reality...will influence

both sides to reach a compromise either in terms of territorial repartition or power sharing." [142]

Sandler and Frisch, as well as other proponents of "federalist," "confederalist," or "shared rule" solutions have argued or implied that the fate of the settlements, and the ideological issues bound up with the future of the West Bank and Gaza, have become such polarizing and divisive questions in Israeli politics that in fact Israel cannot, any longer, consider withdrawal, territorial partition, or formal annexation. Israel cannot tolerate, so the argument goes, the kind of disruption in its internal political stability which attempts by an Israeli government to pursue such options would trigger. [143]

The most serious flaw in this volume, and in the work that has been done in general to explore possibilities for "non-territorial" division of the territories, is that by trying to avoid issues which sharply separate some Israelis from others the most difficult and important questions that confront policy makers are obfuscated. Elazar and his disciples argue that territorially based sovereign states are not historical givens in the Middle East, and that proposals for the political organization of the West Bank and Gaza Strip should not be limited to that model. Still there are certain powers and responsibilities that are closely associated with territorial sovereignty--taxation, land registration, police power, immigration control, determination of citizenship, etc. Any set of "power sharing" or "federalist" arrangements that does not specify how such powers and responsibilities are to be allocated cannot serve as a basis for serious negotiations among states or "communities."

In general the literature represented by the Sandler and Frisch volume is helpful in its emphasis on the political costs the Israeli political system will have to bear if a solution much different from de facto annexation is to be negotiated and implemented. Less helpful are the Rube-Goldberg like administrative devices offered as a substitute for hard choices, but which, analyzed closely, appear mostly to represent de facto Israeli annexation by some other name.

CONCLUSION

The question posed at the outset was whether or not Israeli governments any longer have a meaningful option to disengage from the West Bank and Gaza. Though an Israeli government who wishes to do so will be severely circumscribed in its pursuit of such an option, and though the difficulties involved will tend to dissuade governments from acting on inclinations they may have in that direction, the available evidence does not suggest that de facto annexation processes have already made Israeli withdrawal impossible, or that they will do so in the next few years.

More fundamentally, examination of the most comprehensive analyses of the problem available indicates that there probably does not exist one single, specifiabile point in the cumulative process of settlement, economic investment, infrastructural construction, etc. beyond which separation of the West Bank and Gaza from Israel, along a line close to but not necessarily identical with the Green Line, will be impossible. The notion of there being one single "point of no return," or as Benvenisti has put it more recently, one critical "turning point," is more important for the role it plays as a polemical device, to exhort or discourage opponents of annexation (depending upon the speaker), rather than a useful conceptual category for discussing the likely or possible future of the areas.

Several of the works discussed in this paper refer to domestic political constraints as the most significant obstacle to Israeli withdrawal from the territories. Indeed "facts" created on the ground can contribute to the achievement of a particular political purpose (annexation), or to the prevention of some other political purpose (withdrawal), only if translated into articulated interests with a sustained impact on relevant electoral and decision-making processes. In other words Israeli disengagement is not prevented, per se, by the increasing number of settlers and settlements that might have to be removed or placed under non-Israeli rule if it occurred. Nor is it prevented by the size of the financial compensation package that might be demanded by Israeli residents of the West Bank and Gaza, the formal legal or administrative arrangements that Israel has implemented and would have to revise, the alienation of large amounts of land from direct Arab ownership and control, and/or the role which the West Bank and Gaza, and the settlements which they contain, have come to play in supporting Israeli defense requirements.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that the political weight of the facts created in the West Bank and Gaza is great enough to

convince any Israeli government that by considering policies leading toward disengagement it would risk destruction of its coalition majority and be forced into new elections. This much is not new. It has been true for fifteen years. But since then, and in particular in the wake of seven years of Likud rule, additional, and relatively drastic changes have taken place in the character of Israel's relationship to the territories. More importantly, these changes have been translated into political forces of such size and sophistication that Israeli disengagement from the West Bank and Gaza Strip must be considered an order of magnitude more difficult now than it would have been in the early 1970's. Any Israeli government now contemplating policies leading toward disengagement knows that in addition to risking its coalition majority, it is putting at risk the legal/parliamentary order itself. There is good reason to believe, in other words, that such policies would generate subversive activity within the armed forces and other institutions, violent unrest, and overt challenges to the legitimacy of the state by leading elements within right-wing political parties, Gush Emunim, and the religious camp.[144] Although none of the books discussed in this study focuses on the political dynamics of the opposition to withdrawal should it be pursued seriously by an Israeli government, or the constellation of political forces which may now make the emergence of a government committed to withdrawal highly unlikely, these are the constraints which Heller, Shalev, Sandler and Frisch, and, in the final analysis, even Benvenisti, indicate are crucial.

Thus if the "irreversibility" argument is misconstrued, so is the mainstream Israeli dovish position that "options are open," albeit at a higher cost. Instead of conceiving of the process of absorption or disengagement in terms of a single critical point dividing the possible from the impossible, or of a slowly increasing cost curve that traces change in the availability of different options only by smoothly rising or falling marginal increments, it seems useful to think of two different "thresholds" marking transformations in the political meaning of annexation and in the scale of political upheaval associated with movement toward change in the relationship of the territories to the central state. Such an approach is based on the notion that virtually nothing is really "irreversible" in politics, while incorporating the idea that drastic change in the scale of political problems does occur and can radically transform the implications of previously unproblematic policies.

We may therefore think of two different thresholds that must be crossed by a state if some outlying territory is to be incorporated on as permanent a basis as possible. The first threshold is an institutional threshold--the point at which a government interested in relinquishing the areas finds itself more worried about civic upheavals, violent disorders, and

challenges to the legitimate authority of governmental institutions than with possible defections from the governing coalition or party. The second, and more fundamental, threshold is psycho-cultural--it is the point at which the absorption of the territory ceases to be problematic for the overwhelming majority of citizens of the central state, i.e. when the question of the "future" of the territory is removed from the national political agenda, when no ambitious politician would consider questioning the permanence of the integration of the territory.

The achievement of the Likud governments of 1977-1984, building on the policies of previous Labor governments, and on the unintended consequences of those policies, has been to move Israel in its relationship with the West Bank and Gaza Strip through the first, institutional, threshold. As noted, any Israeli government, for the foreseeable future, will fear the consequences of withdrawal oriented policies for the stability of the regime (the legal/parliamentary order) more than it will their consequences for coalition unity and electoral success. Territorial compromise of the sort which could form the basis for serious negotiations is no longer an option open to an Israeli government unless that government is prepared to risk, and is capable of withstanding massive and violent challenges to its authority.

Democracies have, in the past, weathered such storms. Charles de Gaulle led France back through the institutional threshold on the question of Algeria. In 1958 the problem of France's relationship to Algeria destroyed the regime of the Fourth Republic. In 1960 and 1961 powerful political elements tried to seize power by force in order to prevent the separation of Algeria from France, but de Gaulle, risking the destruction of the Fifth Republic, managed to transform the Algerian problem into a policy issue like many others--one toward which the French government could choose and implement a policy (of Algerian independence) without fear of serious challenges to the legitimate authority of the regime.

The point, however, is that although the institutional threshold has been passed in the Israeli case, Israeli withdrawal from the territories can still be accomplished. The scale of the political crisis that would be associated with such a move cannot prevent it from happening. Its prospect, however, makes withdrawal less likely by inhibiting political initiatives toward disengagement. In other words, the particular conjuncture of international circumstances, leadership capabilities, and internal political conditions required for withdrawal is considerably less likely to materialize, and more difficult to orchestrate, on one side of the institutional threshold than on the other.

On the other hand, with the possible and important exception of East Jerusalem, the second, psycho-cultural threshold, has not yet been crossed. An ingrained presumption does exist within the Israeli body politic that respectable politicians cannot and will not question the political unity of the expanded municipality of Jerusalem. The future of the rest of the West Bank and Gaza, however, very much remains an issue on the Israeli agenda. In the long run, unless the fate of these areas is removed from the agenda of legitimate political debate, changing constellations of power inside and outside the country will continue to force the annexationist camp to struggle vigorously to prevent movement toward withdrawal. Eventually, it will lose one such struggle.

To cross the second threshold--to transform the nation's cognitive and emotional maps in such a way that few Israelis are any longer willing or even able to imagine their country without the West Bank and Gaza--is a psychological task. It is not the automatic result of laws, formal declarations, or numbers of settlers, though it is intimately related to these and other "created facts." Crossing the psycho-cultural threshold depends on replacing certain beliefs, among the mass of Israelis, in what is "possible" and "impossible" or "discussable" and "non-discussable, regarding their life as a political community. For example, there are parts of Galilee which to this day include substantially lower proportions of Jews than some heavily settled areas of the West Bank. Although in 1949 these areas, slated to have become parts of the Palestinian state called for in the UN partition resolution, were still referred to as "occupied territories" in the Israeli press, by the early 1950's they had been absorbed into the national consciousness as commonsensically inseparable portions of the state itself, not to be treated as potential bargaining chips or buffer zones. Today no serious Israeli politician raises the question of relinquishing western and central Galilee, "occupied" by Israel in 1948.

Sophisticated Gush Emunim strategists understand that what they must do is make the question of withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza equivalent to the non-question of withdrawal from the Galilee. That is why they now place their primary emphasis, not on settlements, but on the ideological re-education of Israelis. That is what the effort to replace the words "West Bank" with "Judea and Samaria" is about, and that is why Gush Emunim so much prefers unanswerable ideological/historical/religious arguments to political/security arguments, whose validity is open to reasoned discussion and linked to potentially changeable conditions. That is why their objections to analyses such as those of Shalev, Heller, and Bahiri are not framed in terms of how retention of the territories would serve Israeli security, political, or economic interests more effectively than disengagement. Instead Gush Emunim spokesmen reject the premise

underlying the questions these scholars pose about the relative instrumental value of the territories for enhancing "Israeli" interests--interests falsely distinguished, for Gush Emunim supporters, from the fate of the territories themselves.[145]

If the annexationist camp, led by Gush Emunim and several ultra-nationalist and clericalist parties, succeeds; if it brings about a situation in which the majority of Israelis are as incapable as most of the settlers themselves of imagining the country without "Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District," then--and only then--will annexation be complete, as complete and permanent as anything can be in politics. That is to say the time frame for considering possible change in the relationship of the territories to Israel would lengthen, from five to ten years, to thirty to forty. The West Bank (including greater East Jerusalem) and Gaza might still be separated from Israel--but that would be the result, not of a negotiated withdrawal, but of war or a secessionist movement based on a radically new distribution of political power among Arabs and Jews within the state, and on a very different pattern of political alliances among and between them.[146]

Presently, the Israeli political system, is caught between the two thresholds I have described. Prevented from serious attempts to withdraw from the territories because of threats to the stability of the legal order that could erupt, Israel is also too divided on the issue to relieve itself of the tensions associated with their problematic status by treating the West Bank and Gaza as unquestionably permanent parts of the state. In this context an increasingly difficult problem for Israeli governments, reflected in part by the dramatic upsurge in support for the extremist views of Meir Kahane, will be disruption in the civic life of the country which prolonged and polarizing debate about fundamental political issues generates. Increasingly Israeli governments will be attracted to radical solutions which hold out the promise of stability, normalcy, and consensus.

It is against this background that proposals to move Israel's defense posture toward the nuclear option can be expected to gain support. Many annexationists favor the idea because they see nuclear weapons as a way to deter the Arabs from challenging Israeli fiat in the occupied territories and as a way to avoid the dependence on the United States which continued reliance on costly conventional weapons will entail. Many doves favor the idea because the security they claim it will provide can justify the risks in that sphere associated with complete withdrawal from the territories. As Israel continues to suffer the effects of internal political stalemate on an issue of such enormous import to the society as a whole, centrist politicians will also find themselves attracted to the nuclear option as a key ingredient in a political campaign to save the country.

The United States should therefore consider Israel's relationship to the West Bank and Gaza to be in a state of "unstable equilibrium," constituting a latent, but serious threat to US interests.

FOOTNOTES

1. Gloria H. Falk, "Israeli Public Opinion: Looking toward a Palestinian Solution," Middle East Journal, Vol. 39, no. 3 (Summer 1985) pp. 247-269.
2. In the spring of 1981 Begin dramatically affirmed his devotion to the cause of "the whole Land of Israel." At a large campaign rally in the West Bank settlement of Ariel he declared: "I, Menachem, the son of Ze'ev and Hasia Begin, do solemnly swear that as long as I serve the nation as prime minister, we will not leave any part of Judea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights."
3. See Ian Lustick, "Israel and the West Bank after Elon Moreh: The Mechanics of De Facto Annexation," The Middle East Journal Vol. 35, no. 4 (Autumn 1981) p. 557; and Fawzi A. Gharaibeh, The Economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985) p. 60.
4. Matitiyahu Drobles, Master Plan for the Development of Settlement in Judea & Samaria: 1979-1983 (English--Mimeo) (Jerusalem: October 1978).
5. Meron Benvenisti, The West Bank Data Project: A Survey of Israel's Policies (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1984) p. 55.
6. Fawzi A. Gharaibeh, The Economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985) p. 63.
7. Gharaibeh, p. 61.
8. Hillel Frisch, Stagnation and Frontier: Arab and Jewish Industry in the West Bank (Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1983) p. 41; Shmuel Sandler and Hillel Frisch, Israel, the Palestinians, and the West Bank (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1984) p. 56.
9. Gharaibeh, 38.
10. Transcribed from Agence France Presse, in Joint Publications Research Service, Near East/North Africa Report (JPRS), Oct. 27, 1981, No. ? p. 37.
11. Yehuda Litani, "Operation: 'The Fate of Eretz Yisra'el'" Haaretz, July 15, 1980.

12. Jerusalem Domestic Television Service broadcast, September 28, 1982, reported by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) in Daily Report: (Middle East and North Africa, Oct. 29, 1982, p. 12.
13. For details see Lustick, "Israel and the West Bank...", pp. 565-573.
14. Eitan Sabatello, The Populations of the Administered Territories: Some Demographic Trends and Implications (Jerusalem: The West Bank Data Base Project, 1983) pp. 29-30.
15. Statistical Abstract of Israel, Vol. 35, (1984) p. 742.
16. Maariv, January 12, 1983.
17. Maariv, January 12, 1983.
18. Dani Rubinstein, Davar, July 11, 1983.
19. Shmuel Toledano, "Those Who Prophecy Doom are Right," Haaretz, April 6, 1982, translated in JPRS no. 80962, June 2, 1982, pp. 53-55. For a more cautious assessment, but which still posed the question explicitly as to whether 'the process of Israeli settlement in the occupied territories, and primarily in Judea and Samaria, (has gone) beyond the point of no return' see Yosef Goell, Jerusalem Post, 'Stumbling Blocks,' January 28, 1983.
20. Ian Lustick, "Is Annexation a Fact?" New Outlook Vol. 25 no. 3, pp. 11-18; "Conversation with Shulamit Aloni: I am Tired to Death," Bamahane, Nov. 30, 1983. In conversations the author had with numerous Israelis identified with the anti-annexationist camp in the spring of 1984 a phenomenon known as "internal emigration" was described--a psychological and physical withdrawal from political struggle associated with depression, a sense of hopelessness, and a decision to focus on one's personal life.
21. "Quasi Faits Accomplis," Haaretz, 1/14/83.
22. Amos Elon, "The View from Mount Gerizim," Haaretz, February 4, 1983.
23. Amos Elon, "Stepping up Annexation" Haaretz, February 26, 1983.
24. Al-Hamishmar, April 1, 1983.
25. Jerusalem Post 8/19/83; see also Lova Eliav, "Sever

Israel's Twin," New York Times, October 13, 1983.

26. David Richardson, Jerusalem Post; International Edition, 2/20-26/83.

27. Jerusalem Post, March 20, 1983, in FBIS, March 21, 1983, p. I15.

28. Translated from Ha'olam haze March 16, 1983, in JPRS, No. 83216, April 7, 1983. Similar observations and warnings were made by many Palestinian notables in the occupied territories.

29. See comments of various PLO spokesmen including Yasir Arafat and Hani el-Hasan as reported in FBIS, March 22, 1983, p. A3; April 1, 1983, p. A8; and August 10, 1983 p. A3-4.

30. See, for example, Farouk Qaddumi's comments as reported in FBIS, April 11, 1983, p. A4-5; and those of Yasir Arafat, FBIS, April 1, 1983, p. A8, and July 19, 1983, p. A5.

31. FBIS 4/23/83. In fact it seems clear that one of the underlying reasons for the mutiny within Fatah in 1983 and the violent split in the PLO was the perception by many PLO cadre that Israeli policies in the territories had made the "separate state option," with which Arafat and the mainstream PLO leadership was identified, unrealistic even as an intermediate objective. See Ian Lustick, "Points of No Return," Paper delivered at the 1983 Annual Conference of the Middle Eastern Studies Association, Chicago.

32. FBIS, January 11, 1983, p. F7.

33. FBIS, May 2, 1983, p. F1.

34. FBIS, January 26, 1984, p. F1.

35. Ibrahim Nafi, "Dialogue with the Syrian Mind" Al-Ahram, June 30, 1983, FBIS, 7/11/83, pp. D3-4.

36. FBIS, June 17, 1983, pp. D4-5.

37. Arthur Hertzberg, Foreign Affairs Vol. 61, no. 5 (Summer 1983) pp. 1046-77; Anthony Lewis, "5 Minutes to Midnight" New York Times, November 1, 1982; Ann M. Lesch, "Israeli Settlements on the West Bank: Mortgaging the Future," Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Vol. 7, no. 1 (1984); Amos Perlmutter, "Peres Couldn't Return the Land," New York Times, September 4, 1984; Geoffrey Aronson, "Israel's Irreversible Expansion," New York Times, June 8, 1984; Peter Grose, A Changing Israel (New York: Vintage

Books, 1984) pp. 84-89; Conor Cruise O'Brien, "The Prophets of the Holy Land," Harper's (December 1984) pp. 42-43.

38. Raphael Eytan quoted in the Jerusalem Post, September 2, 1981; Elkana resident quoted in Haaretz, March 8, 1981.

39. Pinchas Wallerstein, "Settlements are not Enough" Nekuda, No. 44 (June 11, 1982) pp. 4-5.

40. Haim Tsuria, "Whither Gush Emunim?" Nekuda, No. 49, October 22, 1982, p. 19.

41. Nekuda, No. 52, December 24, 1982, pp. 6-7.

42. See Zev Schiff, "Demographic Bearhug," Haaretz, October 21, 1979. As described by Schiff in this article the ideas developed by Defense Ministry planners bear a striking and systematic similarity to those developed by Tzaban, et. al. within the World Zionist Organization and explained by Benvenisti (see below). These planners anticipated the settlement of 120,000 Jews in the West Bank by 1988.

43. Yoman Hashavua, November 12, 1982, translated in FBIS, November 12, 1982, p. I16.

44. ITIM news service, January 26, 1983, reported in FBIS, January 28, 1983, p. I4; Six weeks later Mikhael Dekel flatly predicted that "within two years there will be 100,000 Jews in Judea and Samaria, then no Israeli Government will be able to agree to return that area to Arab control." Jerusalem Domestic Service broadcast, March 2, 1983, transcribed in FBIS, March 3, 1983, p. I6.

45. Jerusalem Domestic Service, March 2, 1983, transcribed in FBIS, March 4, 1983, p. I6.

46. Nekuda, Editorial, No. 53 January 14, 1983, p. 3.

47. Nekuda, No.58, May 17, 1983, pp. 2-3.

48. Nekuda, No.59, June 10, 1983, p. 11.

49. Nekuda, No.61, July 18, 1983. p. 4.

50. Nekuda, No. 63, September 7, 1983, p. 2.

51. Aryeh Dayan, "The Last Option: Reactions" Koteret Rashit, March 21, 1983, p. 18.

52. Meron Benvenisti, 'First Steps to a Solution,' Jerusalem Post, April 7, 1981.

53. "Summary of a Conversation with Meron Benvenisti," (mimeo) (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, October 27, 1982).
54. Meron Benvenisti, 'Israel's Deepening Wound', New York Times, February 13, 1983.
55. "The West Bank in Year 2010: Israeli Control Seems Permanent, Planner Says," The Christian Science Monitor, April 25, 1984.
56. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 68.
57. Ibid., p. 68-my emphasis.
58. See for example "Study Warns that Israel May Have an Irreversible Grip on West Bank," Washington Post, April 24, 1984; Milton Viorst, 'Is It All Over on the West Bank? A New Study Reaches an Extreme Conclusion' Washington Post, April 29, 1984; 'West Bank Annexation Seen,' Chicago Tribune, April 25, 1984; 'Study Sees Israel Staying in Arab Areas,' New York Times, April 25, 1984; and Meir Ben-Gur, 'Benvenisti's Revenge,' Maariv, April 30, 1984.
59. "Study Sees Israel Staying in Arab Areas," New York Times, April 25, 1984.
60. "The West Bank in Year 2010: Israeli Control Seems Permanent, Planner Says," The Christian Science Monitor, April 25, 1984.
61. For examples of this sort of Israeli dovish critique of Benvenisti's irreversibility thesis see A. Schweitzer, "The Illusion of Settlement," Haaretz, December 3, 1982; Aryeh Dayan, "The Last Option," Koteret Rashit, March 14, 1983, pp. 11-12; Abba Eban, "Reflecting on Negotiations," Jerusalem Post, June 22, 1984; Aryeh Yaari, "The French Case," Al-Hamishmar, July 15, 1984; Raanan Weitz, "Facts on Paper in the West Bank," Haaretz, April 24, 1985; "The Prospects for the Peace Process," New Outlook, Vol. 28, no. 7, (July 1985) pp. 37-38; and Yehoshaphat Harkabi, The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Future Perspective, pamphlet, (Tel Aviv: International Center for Peace in the Middle East, June 1985).
62. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 64.
63. Ibid., p. 6.
64. Ibid., see pp. 18, 20, and Chapter 6, especially Table 28, p. 61 "Jewish Population in the West Bank, Actual and

Projected, 1972-1990"

65. Eitan Sabatello, 'The Populations of the Administered Territories: Some Demographic Trends and Implications' (Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1983) p. 7.
66. Ibid., pp. 41-42.
67. Ibid., pp. 42-43.
68. Dani Rubinstein, personal interview with the author, (Jerusalem: April 1984).
69. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 4.
70. Cited in Maariv August 14, 1984; Haaretz, June 26, 1984.
71. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 5.
72. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 49.
73. "Israeli Population in the West Bank--1984," (The West Bank Data Base Project, 1985) p. 1.
74. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 19.
75. Usamah Halabi, Aron Turner, and Meron Benvenisti, "Land Alienation in the West Bank: A Legal and Spatial Analysis," (West Bank Data Base Project: Jerusalem, 1985) p. 86.
76. "Israeli Population in the West Bank--1984," (The West Bank Data Base Project, 1985) p. 3; Haaretz, September 14, 1984.
77. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 62.
78. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), pp. 16-17 and 62.
79. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), pp. 20-22.
80. For example, virtually all the information and projections tracing settlement policies and demographic and settlement patterns in the West Bank until the year 2010, contained in maps 5,10,11, and 12 in the Benvenisti study, are drawn from Map No.1 appended to the 1983 WZO plan entitled "Development of Settlement in Samaria and Judea: Areas of Demand and Settlement Priority." Additional maps appended to the plan, titled "Jewish Settlement in the year 2010: Ideal Distribution Pattern;" "Development Plan for Highways--1986;" "Development

Plan for Settlement--1986;" and "Aid by Areas," provide the basis for many of the other maps and descriptions of future trends which Benvenisti and his staff set forth.

81. "Bloc of the Faithful"--the ultra-nationalist network of settlers and religious and political groups dedicated to permanent Israeli incorporation of the occupied territories.

82. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), pp. 15-18.

83. Hillel Frisch, Stagnation and Frontier: Arab and Jewish Industry in the West Bank (Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1983) p. 86.

84. Ibid., pp. 76-86.

85. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 51.

86. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), (Ben p. 54.

87. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 54).

88. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 54.

89. Haim Tzaban, et.al., Master Plan for the Settlement of Samaria and Judea: Development Plan for the Area for the Years 1983-86 (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization Settlement Department and State of Israel Ministry of Agriculture, 1983) Drobles introduction and p. 9.

90. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 59.

91. Interview with author, Jerusalem, April 1984.

92. See, for example, the results of a poll on Israeli budget cutting preferences reported in the Jerusalem Post, January 3, 1984.

93. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 56.

94. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 57.

95. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 59.

96. Annette Hochstein, Metropolitan Links between Israel and the West Bank, (Jerusalem: The West Bank Data Base Project, 1983) p. 51, emphasis added.

97. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 59.

98. Benvenisti, The West Bank..., (1984), p. 59.

99. Haim Tzaban, et.al., Master Plan for the Settlement of Samaria and Judea: Development Plan for the Area for the Years 1983-86 (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization Settlement Department and State of Israel Ministry of Agriculture, 1983) p. 15.

100. At some points the development plan is treated as a plan for four years, though issued in April of 1983 and titled a plan for the years "1983-1986" it would appear to be intended as a plan for a three year period. In Drobles' introduction it is specifically referred to as a plan "for the coming three years." To insure against exaggeration of the plan's claims I have assumed a 3 1/2 year planning period for the calculation of average annual expenditure projections.

101. Haim Tzaban, et.al., Master Plan for the Settlement..., p. 61.

102. Ibid., p. 8.

103. Ibid., p. 9. Specifically the plan envisages, by sector of the area, the following population balances in 2010:

	Arabs	Jews
"Northern Samaria"	230,000	50,000
"Central Samaria"	550,000	400,000
"Jerusalem area"		
(including West Jerusalem)	600,000	800,000
"Hebron area"	250,000	50,000

104. This estimate for annual expenditure is based on a 3 1/2 year budget-planning period encompassing 1983-1986. See above footnote 100.

105. FBIS, June 30, 1982, I2.

106. Davar, February 26, 1985, reported in FBIS, February 27, 1985, p. I9.

107. Transcribed from a broadcast of the Jerusalem Domestic Service, July 7, 1985, FBIS, July 9, 1985, p. I3.

108. Statistical Abstract of Israel, Vol. 35 (1984) p. 166.

109. The planners make no attempt to estimate costs beyond 1986.

110. Tzaban, et.al., Master Plan for the Settlement..., p. 65.
111. Ibid., p. 65.
- 111a. Statistical Abstract of Israel, Vol. 35 (1984) p. 498 and 528.
112. Tzaban, et.al., Master Plan for the Settlement..., pp. 67-69.
113. Israel Government Yearbook, (Hebrew) (1983/84) p. 159.
114. FBIS, April 26, 1985, I6.
115. Al-Hamishmar, January 8, 1985, translated in JPRS, 85-021.
116. Jerusalem Post International Edition, for the week ending July 20, 1985.
117. Tzaban, et.al., Master Plan for the Settlement..., p. 132.
118. Aside from the scarcity of resources available to the government, evidence that housing prices are falling within Israeli metropolitan centers along the coastal plain calls into question the whole thrust of the plans--which assumes that an increasingly difficult housing market will push Israelis into the West Bank, if only the infrastructure and some temporary subsidies can be put in place. Concerning the fall in Israeli housing prices in the coastal plain see Eliahu Borokhov, "Deepening Freeze in Construction," The Israel Economist, (January, 1985) pp. 28-29.
119. Most of them, in fact, appear sure that Israel is in the West Bank for good. Personal interviews with residents of several West Bank settlements during the spring of 1984.
120. Additional evidence for the failure of the plan can be seen in the decision by the Likud government, late in its second term, to allow and even encourage settlement in this "negative" area in order to increase, by any means possible, what it took to be most politically important--the sheer number of settlers over the Green Line. See report of the establishment of a new settlement in this zone with government support, ITIM news service, January 19, 1984, translated in FBIS, January 20, 1984, p. I3.
121. Matitiyahu Drobles, "Master Plan for the Development of Settlement in Judea and Samaria: 1979-1983," (mimeo) (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization, Department for Rural Settlement,

October 1978).

122. See Ian Lustick, Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel's Control of a National Minority (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980).

123. Simcha Bahiri, Peaceful Separation or Enforced Unity: Economic Consequences for Israel and the West Bank/Gaza Area (Tel Aviv: International Center for Peace in the Middle East, February 1984) p. 20.

124. See Vivian, The West Bank--Is It Viable? (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1975; Elias Tuma and Haim Darin-Drabkin, The Economic Case for Palestine (London: Croom Helm, 1978); Brian Van Arkadie, Benefits and Burdens: A Report on the West Bank and Gaza Strip Economies Since 1967 (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1977; and Fawzi A. Gharaibeh, The Economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985).

125. Simcha Bahiri, Peaceful Separation or Enforced Unity..., p. 2.

126. Ibid., p. 15.

127. Ibid., p. 16.

128. This is Meron Benvenisti's estimate, see "Israeli Population in the West Bank--1984 (End of Year)," (mimeo) (Jerusalem: The West Bank Data Base Project, April 1985. In February 1985, Matitياهو Drobles claimed there were 51,000 Jews in the West Bank. Davar, February 26, 1985, reported in FBIS, February 27, 1985, p. 19. The new co-director of the Land Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency, Nissim Zvili, was reported to have said that in July 1985 only 20,000 Jews lived in 160 settlements in the West Bank, Golan, and Gaza Strip. FBIS, July 9, 1985, p. 13 transcribed from Jerusalem Domestic Service, July 7, 1985.

129. Simcha Bahiri, Peaceful Separation or Enforced Unity..., p. 5.

130. Ibid., p. 44.

131. Ibid., p. 45.

132. Widespread references to Shalev's work draw primarily on the brief synopses available in English, and often distort his conclusions. See for example Sara M. Averick and Steven J. Rosen, The Importance of the 'West Bank' and Gaza to Israel's Security, AIPAC Papers on U.S.-Israel Relations:

11, (AIPAC, 1985).

133. Aryeh Shalev, Defense Line in the West Bank (Hebrew) (Israel: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1982) p. 101.

134. Ibid., p. 136.

135. Mark A. Heller, A Palestinian State: The Implications for Israel (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982) p. 147.

136. Ibid., pp. 147 and 154.

137. Ibid., p. 142.

138. Ibid., p. 113

139. Ibid., p. 115.

140. Shmuel Sandler and Hillel Frisch, Israel, the Palestinians, and the West Bank (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1984) p. 141.

141. Ibid., p. 142.

142. Ibid., pp. 170-71.

143. Ibid., p. 169; Yosef Lanir, A Confederative Solution to the Israeli-Arab Conflict, (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute for Federal Studies, 1979); and Allan E. Shapiro, "The Federal Formula," Jerusalem Post International Edition, January 2-8, 1983.

144. Concerning the likelihood of such developments see, for example, Yoram Peri, Between Battles and Ballots (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) pp. 284-287); Yuval Elitsur, in Maariv, November 27, 1983; and Lea Anbel, "The Hussein Initiative: What the Settlers in the Territories Will Do," Koteret Rashit, No. 131, June 5, 1985, p. 7.

145. For examples of Gush Emunim discussions of the requirements and the challenges involved in crossing what I have termed the "psycho-cultural threshold" see Daniella Weiss, Nekuda, No. 63, September 7, 1983, p. 23; Nekuda, editorial, No. 68, January 13, 1984, p. 3; and Yoel Ben-Nun, "State of Israel vs. Land of Israel," Nekuda, pp. 28-31, 36.

146. For opposing views on the question of whether or not withdrawal from the territories is "unthinkable" for the generation of Israelis born after 1967 see Eli Tabor, "Why Is Youth Moving Toward the Right?" Yediot Acharonot, August 10,

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1984, translated in JPRS, 84-152, October 10, 1984, p. 63;
and "The Generation of 1967," Koteret Rashit, No. 131, June
5, 1985, pp. 3, 16-17.

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